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THE

WORLD OF LONDON

(LA SOCIÉTÉ DE LONDRES).

85724

BY

COUNT PAUL VASILI.

London:
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON,
CROWN BUILDINGS, 188, FLEET STREET.
1885.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

The English publishers deem it due to themselves to state that they had entered into an agreement to publish this work without having seen any portion of it, and relying on the high reputation of the house from which it emanates in France.

In this agreement, they, however, specially stipulated that they should be at liberty to use their judgment and discretion in the suppression of any such portion of the contents of the work as they might consider objectionable, and in the exercise of this discretion they now frankly avow that they have found themselves compelled to omit several passages which they can only regard as scandalous, if not libellous.

Even in this, its confessedly expurgated form, the book may still contain matter of a character not congenial to English taste; but it must be remembered that the work is that of a foreigner giving his views of *London Society*, and London society is thereby afforded an opportunity of seeing itself as it is seen by others.

London May 21, 1885.

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PREFACE.

St. Petersburgh, April, 1885.

My dear young Friend,

I promised you some letters from London, and here they are, rather sooner than I wished to send them, for I did not think of publishing them until next autumn. But events are taking place so rapidly in England, and I was afraid everything would soon be looking so different, that by the action of one of those sudden changes which Prince Bismarck describes as "the psychological moment," the sketches I was quietly finishing at home would be rendered out of date.

In these letters about London you will not find anything analogous to the letters on Berlin and Vienna; for those cities have nothing in common with the English metropolis. The

United Kingdom is different in origin, manners, and ideas, from the continental countries, and is separated from them by difference of development and by special transformations, much more widely than by the intervening ocean.

In London we find a society made up of contrasts; a medley of modern ideas and antiquated prejudices, intellectual advancement and stolid customs, unequalled material progress, and stubborn moral opposition.

The subject is so complex, that to do it justice would require a voluminous work, such as our fathers used to write, but which neither you nor I would have time or patience to read.

PAUL VASILI.

[Though the facts in this book come from Count Vasili's personal knowledge, observation and inquiries, all from English sources, he is indebted to the following for some information:—

Some of the remarks on the turf are derived from Lord Cadogan's pen; on the newspapers, from Charles Pebody ("English Journalism"); on music, from "La Musique au Pays des Brouillards." A few of Jehu Junior's portraits have also completed the Count's personal information. Three political portraits owe a part of their facts to the clever studies of Mr. Frank H. Hill.]

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THE WORLD OF LONDON.

FIRST LETTER.

THE QUEEN.

On one point all English people are agreed—it is that "divinity doth hedge" their Queen. To whatever party an Englishman belongs, he will agree with his most vehement opponent in regarding Queen Victoria as a being apart from common life. Every good citizen regards the Queen with a sort of religious awe, and Royalty, so freely discussed in England in its political and administrative organization, is sacred in the person who represents the essence of power.

I, who am not an Englishman, and have no

reason to regard her Majesty Queen Victoria as the representative of a divine right, will venture to draw aside the veil of the sanctuary, and truthfully depict the woman who is hidden behind the prestige of the crown.

First, let me remark that the Queen as she is, and the Queen as she was in the lifetime of the exemplary Prince Consort, are two entirely different persons. The former had in her husband a guide, a counsellor, the object of her devoted attachment; she had a stately and splendid court; she was clever, charming, gay, light-hearted; everything pleased her, and she was entirely free from pride.

She had a voice as sweet as a bird's, and sang like one in her happy days. Mendelssohn saw this gentle Queen putting her drawing-room in order with her own hands, and she sang to him with diffidence. Etiquette was then limited to the demands of her exalted position, she was full of the tenderness of a young mother; she loved pleasure, and indulged her taste. She mingled freely with her sub-

jects, and shed over the whole nation the sunshine of her happiness. She was at that time an extremely elegant woman.

The nature of the Queen has been much altered by her great grief, and personal acquaintance with her excites conflicting feelings. A portrait drawn of her Majesty during her lifetime must be in many respects a contradiction and a paradox.

Her Majesty Queen Victoria is the daughter of the Duke of Kent, the younger brother of William IV., and of George IV., neither of whom left direct heirs.

The British Constitution holds the Queen infallible, inviolable, and above the law. She has all rights, absolutely, but she does not practically exercise them. She has to govern through her Ministers. Her Majesty's private life is devoted to the cherished memories of the past.

She resides at Windsor, at Osborne, or at Balmoral alternately, and rarely visits the capital.

The Queen thoroughly understands politics, and is highly informed. She has been well taught by Sir Robert Peel, Lord Russell, Lord Palmerston, Lord Beaconsfield, and Mr. Gladstone. Her mind was formed and guided by the wisdom and prudence of Prince Albert, and she is a competent authority on every subject to which she gives her attention.

Diplomatists and politicians who have opportunities of observing them, are struck by the extent of her knowledge, the clearness of her views, and her wonderful memory.

Queen Victoria is the model of a constitutional sovereign; but she entrusts to the Prince of Wales all the representative duties of her position. Her Majesty only gives private receptions to a few official visitors, or to persons of distinction on their travels.

The days are, indeed, far past when the young Queen gave garden parties in Buckingham Palace to more than six hundred guests; when on rainy afternoons every one had to beguile the time by narrating some amusing

anecdote; or when Her Majesty, with her hair powdered, excited universal admiration at a famous fancy ball by her graceful dancing of a minuet; or when she carelessly carried off the keys of the official despatch-boxes when she went for a ride, and lost them on the road, so that a squad of policemen had to be sent to search for them, to the amusement of all London. There remains but one sole trait in the character of the Queen that recalls those former days. It is when at the Gillies' ball her Majesty appears with all her household.

She is very fond of Scotland and her dear Highlanders; the humblest among them are her friends. She treats them with kindness, and they return it by affection. There everything is familiar to her, from Geldershiel and Glassaltshiel Glens to the lakes and peaks of Craig Govan. There she is interested in everything, delighted at everything, attached to everything, especially to her two dogs, "Sharp" and "Noble."

Peasants drink to her health by the road-side, and John Brown used to answer them with the frank Scotch bluntness that was a feature in his honest character. As I have mentioned his name, I will add a touching detail. When John Brown lost his father (a small farmer) the Queen went herself to console the poor blind widow, sat beside her in her kitchen among the relations of the deceased, took part in the prayers and in all the traditional and primitive customs of the simple mountaineers, sharing their grief as if she had lost a member of her own family. Quite lately she attended the funeral of Willie Blair, her old Highland fiddler, who died at ninety years of age, and she ordered a monument to be erected to him in the churchyard at Crathie.

The Queen leads a perfectly simple, indeed rustic life, at Balmoral; etiquette no longer reigns; freedom is unrestrained.

Her Majesty is awakened every morning by the bagpipes of her Highlanders.

The Queen detests smoking, and the practice is strictly prohibited at Windsor Castle.

What would she have said if she had found herself in the position of Lady Shaftesbury, who, having taken Garibaldi into her boudoir after dinner, saw him coolly light a cigarette as a matter of course, without asking her permission? Smokers have no pity, and you are probably aware that the Vienna Conference had to be interrupted for an hour, to allow the French and Turkish ambassadors to go out and smoke.

At great official ceremonies the Queen seldom appears, and, when she has to make a speech, on presenting colours to a regiment, or on decorating some hero, she dislikes the exertion extremely.

When she does consent to show herself to her people, she always occupies an open carriage, whatever the weather may be, so as not to disappoint the faithful subjects who have collected to see her.

The greatest part of the Queen's day is occu-

pied in exercise in the open air, driving, and walking.

She receives a few political persons, especially the Prime Minister, the Duke of Richmond, her friend and adviser, and more frequently still, her Secretary, the worthy General Ponsonby. A Cabinet messenger is despatched to her after each Council, even if she is at the far end of Scotland, and the Prime Minister's day's work is always terminated by a letter to the Queen. When any great event or crisis occurs, her time is occupied in receiving and despatching telegrams. She reads, works, and writes a great deal.

The musical evenings she used to enjoy with two or three friends are things of the past; but if she has given up music, she has not entirely abandoned the fine arts. A short time ago, Mr. Green, the famous water-colour painter, was summoned to Balmoral, to give the Queen lessons in drawing, and remained there for some months. At her first lesson she said, very simply, as she took up her pencil, "I feel so

nervous." Although she is a good judge of the works of others, the Queen paints and draws only pretty well, and her unpretending writings will not shed a great lustre upon English literature. Her works are revised by Sir Theodore Martin, the well-known author of "The Life of the Prince Consort."

When the Queen wishes to show her sympathy with any institution, she presents it with a copy of her "Journal of Our Life in the Highlands."

Of her three royal residences the Queen prefers Balmoral. She has had a cross in memory of the Princess Alice, and an obelisk to the Prince Consort erected there. She is much influenced by the place that she inhabits, and is a totally different person at Balmoral and at Windsor. At Balmoral she recalls the sweetest memories of her life; and again sees in fancy, the old building, with its small rooms. In the old billiard-room the Queen was constantly obliged to rise from her seat to let the players pass.

I cannot leave the subject of Balmoral without alluding to the well-known John Brown, who was both a servant and an adviser to his royal mistress. John Brown is dead, and the Queen has raised a statue to him under her windows, and devoted some pages of her second book to his memory. To my mind there is something very touching in the esteem and confidence bestowed by the sovereign upon her faithful servant, whose devotion was a ray of light upon her saddened life.

SECOND LETTER.

THE ROYAL FAMILY.

If I were to enumerate the various members of the royal family, the children, grandchildren, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, nephews, nieces, and collateral princes and princesses, I should bore you as effectually as I bored you with the long list of the Austrian archdukes in my letters on Vienna.

The Prince of Wales stands by every right in the first place, and no one could fill it better, with a more charming presence or a more gallant mien.

His character is a contrast to that of the genuine Englishman. He bears a resemblance to Henry V., as Shakespeare depicts that prince.

He is fond of pleasure, has high spirits, and is interested in everything worthy of interest.

If, on the one hand, the Prince of Wales is a man of a former age, he is on the other perfectly modern; he is a Parisian living in London, he loves the Boulevard, and conversation full of wit and repartee, in which he plays his part to admiration.

He is admittedly the finest and first gentleman of the United Kingdom, and if he claims, as he is said to do, the title of the first gentleman in Europe, that claim, though great, is not excessive.

His courtesy is exquisite, his grace of manner is irresistible, he throws himself entirely into the matter that for the moment occupies his attention, and makes each favoured person to whom he speaks believe that he is an object of especial consideration. But the future King of England is chiefly distinguished from many of his countrymen by his complete freedom from arrogance.

His friends say that with them he forgets.

his rank, but it is only on the condition that they remember it, and his familiarity with others is not theirs with him.

Possessing perfect tact himself, he never forgives the want of it, and knows how to remind those around him of what is due to him. One evening while the Prince was playing billiards, an equerry quietly slipped off, and the Prince, leaving him time to undress and go to bed, suddenly affected to observe his absence, and sent for him. He is kind-hearted, and incapable of resentment, but at the moment of an offence, he is severe. It is needless to say that the Prince of Wales is the best-dressed man in England, and that no fashion is a success unless he introduces it. He has the rare talent of uniting extreme refinement and simplicity.

No man in public life works harder than the Prince of Wales. He is constantly receiving deputations, celebrating anniversaries, presiding at banquets of all kinds, and charities of every description. Condemned to gigantic

luncheons, monster dinners, and interminable suppers, he yet rarely refuses an invitation. He passes a few pleasant hours every day at his club, opposite Marlborough House. He is interested in every kind of sport, and is one of the best shots living. He may indeed be called a *virtuoso* of the gun. He frequently attends the House of Commons, inaugurates monuments, opens exhibitions, unveils statues, and he has laid first stones enough to construct a stately edifice. He holds levées, gives official balls, in fact bears all the penalties and accepts all the ceremonial tasks of royalty.

Fortunately for the Prince, politics are forbidden by the Constitution, for he might have been induced to form a personal party, and that must always be a party of intrigue. The Prince has never lent himself to any manifestation of opinion, and has never been carried away by any political current. He attends the meetings of Parliament in order to learn, and studies the papers carefully, but is satisfied always to remain a spectator. Apart from politics, he

interests himself warmly in every public movement, and especially in all social improvements. The condition of the labouring and poorer classes occupies much of his time and thoughts, and he has set a noble example to all landowners by facilitating the sale of land to labourers on his own estates. The present farming system in England is so pernicious that it contains the germ of an agrarian revolution. The Prince has the good taste never to say, "When I am king," but, "If ever I am king."

His eldest son, Prince Albert Victor of Wales, is still a boy at twenty-one years old.

This tardy development, may, however, be deceptive, and the Queen herself observed lately, that the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh were exactly the same at his age, and that he reminded her strongly of them.

The Prince of Wales has had his two sons brought up at sea, and they are consequently genuine sailors, ignorant of the pleasures of town life.

The daughters of the Prince are brought up in the most simple manner. The three sisters occupy one large bedroom, furnished very plainly; they lead so quiet a life that they are still children, although the eldest is seventeen years old. They are constantly with their mother, forming a charming group, and a fitting frame for her gracious presence. They are very distinguished in manner, very graceful, and extremely well educated.

The lives of these five children have been passed in simplicity that does honour to the good sense of their parents.

The Princess of Wales, the daughter of the King of Denmark, is fascination itself, and is much beloved by all classes of English people.

The Princess, who is amiable, and of a gentle, quiet nature, is the type of character most admired in England.

She is a devoted wife and mother, sympathetic without familiarity, prudent without prudery, dignified without haughtiness. She was brought

up, as she is now bringing up her own children, with the greatest simplicity.

Her love of children, her respect for old people, her compassion for the unfortunate, her ready generosity, are truly admirable qualities.

The Princess is an excellent musician; her taste is refined; she dresses wonderfully well, and always suitably to the occasion. Although she is now forty years old, she has the secret of perpetual youth.

She has not inherited the ability of her mother, Queen Louise of Denmark; her intelligence is not striking, and she does not care for clever people.

However, she more than atones for this by the possession of a quality rarer than the Phœnix itself, she never speaks ill of anybody, therefore she has not an enemy. Her most intimate friend is her Lady-in-Waiting, Miss Knollys.

The Queen's second son, the Duke of Edinburgh, is the fiddler of the Court; he was born with an oar in one hand and a violin in the other. The Prince has traversed the whole

world, and enjoyed every kind of pleasure, physical, intellectual, and artistic.

He is a handsome man, but has not the charm of the Prince of Wales, for, unlike him—not the only point of difference between them—he despises dress and elegance.

The Duke of Edinburgh is a true sailor, frank of manners and blunt of speech. He is a good shot, and very expert at all bodily exercises. He plays the violin to his sailors, and at charity concerts, especially in the Albert Hall, before a large audience of persons. An amateur orchestra has even been organized for him, and meets every week under the direction of Mr. Mount.

The Duchess of Edinburgh, the daughter of our Czars, suffers from the rather inferior position that she occupies in London. She is considered haughty, but she is only proud, and she has not been able to accustom herself to English manners, although she has made many offers to do so.

She is very amiable, a very brilliant talker,

loves argument, and holds her own with skill. With her cleverness and information, both far beyond the average, she naturally disdains foolish and frivolous society, and she has succeeded in making her home so bright and attractive that her husband gladly stays there.

The Duke and Duchess have few friends. They are not very popular, and live in comparative retirement.

Count Adlerberg, the secretary to the Russian ambassador, is almost their only intimate friend.

The Queen's third son, the Duke of Connaught, represents the army, and is much liked in society. In Egypt he proved himself to be a good soldier, and a great disciplinarian, and he had the good taste to sink his rank, to submit to orders, to bear the drudgery and help in the roughest work of the campaign, entering intelligently into all the requirements of the service, and never allowing any exception to be made in his favour. Like all the Queen's children, he has musical tastes, and plays the instrument suitable to his profession—the drum.

The Duke of Connaught will probably one day preside at the Horse Guards, which means that he will become Commander-in-Chief of the army when the Duke of Cambridge vacates the post. This dignity is always conferred on a member of the Royal Family, and the Duke of Connaught will be worthy of it.

There is nothing particular to be said about the Duchess of Connaught, except that she is very amiable and generally liked.

The Queen's fourth son was that lamented Prince Leopold who was so prematurely snatched away by death.

His widow, the Duchess of Albany, a German princess, is very fond of the country; its rural pleasures have greater attractions for her than London society. It is not possible to call her pretty, but her health is superb, and she is so kind and good that everybody likes her in spite of her homely ways.

Princess Christian is an excellent woman who takes a great interest in educational matters.

The Princess Louise is more artistic than

her sisters. She is also more self-willed, and has a romantic disposition. She is married to the Marquis of Lorne, eldest son of the Duke of Argyll.

The Marquis gained much popularity during his five years of office in Canada; he has admirable qualities as a governor and statesman. His character is lofty, noble, and true; and his blameless life, his liberal opinions, his love of right, his equable and conciliatory temper, and his intelligent and disinterested love of work have won golden opinions for him from all.

The Princess Beatrice, the Queen's youngest daughter, has artistic tastes, is an excellent musician, and paints well. She is well-read, and possesses some literary ability. She is about to marry Prince Henry of Battenberg. The young prince is an officer in the Prussian Guards.

The Queen has given her consent to this marriage only on the condition of her daughter remaining near her; apartments are being pre-

pared for the young couple at Windsor, and it is said the Queen means to make her new son-in-law her private secretary.

The other princes of the blood royal are first, the Commander-in-Chief of the army, the Duke of Cambridge, the cousin of the Queen. A genuine old soldier, a staunch upholder of the Constitution of his country, very jealous, of his authority, highly competent on all military questions, he has always been able to hold his own against every minister of war who has tried to subordinate the Horse Guards to Pall Mall. It must be added, however, that he is not always consulted, and that he is sometimes very much surprised to find the changes that have been made in the army without his knowledge. The Duke of Cambridge is popular in society. His sister, the Princess Mary, married the Duke of Teck—a son of Duke Alexander of Würtemberg and Countess Rhedey, who received the title of Countess Hohenstein on her morganatic marriage.

The Duke of Teck is a handsome man, a good horseman, and a great favourite in English society. The Duke and Duchess have several children. They no longer reside in England.

The Duchess of Cambridge resides at St. James's Palace. This venerable lady reminds one of the witty saying of Auber, "*Vieillir est encore le seul moyen qu'on ait trouvé de vivre.*"

I will pass over in silence the son of the ex-King of Hanover, the Duke of Cumberland, who lives in Austria, and the Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

THIRD LETTER.

THE COURT.

SINCE Prince Albert's death, the Queen having retired from the world, the Court gradually dispersed and a new circle was formed round the Prince and Princess of Wales.

Her Majesty is represented by her children at levées, drawing-rooms, and state balls.

Court etiquette often gives rise to amusing incidents, and a good many droll stories might be told, such as that of the American who appeared at a levée in a short jacket, yellow waistcoat, and black cravat, having made a bet that he would be presented to her Majesty in this unorthodox costume. When he was refused admittance, the United States minister,

Mr. Dallas, actually took the part of his eccentric countryman, and they both left the Palace in anger.

Besides the Drawing-room and Levée, which everybody who is anybody may attend, there is an inner circle, which I will call the Younger Court. This is very select, and graced by some rare beauties.

Except a few parties and little dinners in town, the Prince receives principally at Sandringham. In the hunting season, about twenty guests at a time are honoured by invitations and generally stay for a week. They find themselves in a luxurious mansion surrounded by lovely gardens, the very walls smiling with bright welcome, and the young and handsome hosts beaming with genial hospitality. In no home in the kingdom is a guest so sure of a gracious reception as at Sandringham. The Princess herself conducts the ladies to their rooms, and the Prince superintends every detail of his house.

Both fulfil their duties with an attention, a

kindly care, and real anxiety for the welfare of their visitors, that the master and mistress of every house, however great, or however small, would do well to imitate. Among the little things that struck me, I must mention a book, in which the arrivals and departures of guests, their usual habits, special requirements, &c., are entered with the scrupulous exactitude of a merchant's ledger. How different from most royal residences in Europe!

The invitations for the end of autumn are, of course, for pheasant and partridge shooting.

Men who do not shoot accompany the ladies in waggonettes, and betake themselves to a vast tent erected in the grounds, for the enjoyment of an elegant luncheon with the sportsmen.

The evenings at Sandringham are devoted to playing at cards or at skittles, with pretty little skittles fit for the use of ladies.

Sunday is divided between church-going and visiting the Prince's zoological garden.

It only contains bears and dogs, but there are a large number. The Princess is very fond of animals, and takes great care of them, feeding her favourites with her own hands. She is always surrounded by a number of dogs, and never travels without them, the footmen and ladies'-maids have their arms full of them, and as some of the animals are always trying to escape, they give plenty of trouble.

A fête, something like the Gillies' ball in Scotland, is given on the Prince's birthday. All the Royal Family, their attendants, and visitors, dance with their servants.

The Prince surrounds himself at Sandringham by remarkable people of every kind; literary men, artists, journalists, directors of exhibitions, constructors of railways, engineers, inventors, learned men, politicians of every shade of opinion, and clever women, every one who is distinguished in any way, or who has any claim to consideration, is welcomed to his charming abode.

From this lively circle all scheming is scrupu-

lously banished; the Princess cannot endure gossip, and at Sandringham no one ventures to calumniate his neighbour. The least attempt at scandal or insinuation is immediately, and somewhat impatiently, rebuked.

The Prince has a small circle of intimate friends, his habitual guests, and whom he also visits. The principal members of this little group are, the Duchess of Manchester, the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, Lady Aylesbury, Lord and Lady Dudley, Lord and Lady Spencer, Lord and Lady Charles Beresford, Lord and Lady Alington, Lord Cadogan, Lord and Lady Dalhousie, Lord and Lady Carrington, Lady Lonsdale, Lady Mandeville, M. and Mme. de Falbe, the new Lady Londonderry, &c., &c.

The Duke and Duchess of Sutherland possess one of the oldest names and largest fortunes in Great Britain. They live at Stafford House, a wonderful edifice, copied from the Barberini Palace in Rome; its hall and staircase are among the artistic curiosities of London. This does not, however, imply that the owners are people

of artistic taste. Nothing can surpass the sumptuous magnificence of the fêtes given by the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland.

The Duke possesses the most beautiful equipages in London, but drives a plain vehicle with one horse. He is very "odd," very proud, and supremely indifferent; but he enjoys great popularity, on account of the sympathy that he bestows on the weak and oppressed; and the liberality with which he gives money for charitable purposes. In politics his opinions are Liberal.

The Duchess, who has been very beautiful, patronizes the Blue Ribbon Army, and holds temperance meetings in the most beautiful drawing-rooms in the world.

Lord Spencer, the Viceroy of Ireland, is chiefly distinguished by an astonishing beard, a beard so gigantic that his friends think it funny to say he can hide himself behind it, and say he is not at home.

Lady Spencer, a perfect type of the *grande dame*, is called "Spencer's Faery Queene" by

her Irish admirers. She is lively, clever, and amiable; she dresses to perfection, wears marvellous jewels, is well-read, and a delightful talker.

Gladys, Lady Lonsdale, is one of the loveliest women in London. She takes an interest in everything, arts, science, politics; surrounds herself with clever people, and, regardless of their rank, admits Bohemians of the pen and pencil. She has taste, some reading, and very high aspirations; indeed a varnish of all things, and I should no more allow myself to criticize the depth of her knowledge than the size of her feet.

At the moment I write to you a marriage between Lady Lonsdale and Lord De Grey is announced.

Her rival, Lady Londonderry, is also a beauty, and very fascinating, although her haughty manners give offence to those who would otherwise be her friends. Lady Londonderry is an excellent hostess, and takes a great interest in sport.

Lady Cadogan is among those women of whom it is said with serene indifference, that they are "perfectly charming." Lord Cadogan must appear among the sportsmen, a *rôle* in which he distinguishes himself. At the younger court he holds a secondary rank. He possesses some literary ability. His house is pleasant, he gives good dinners, and his invitations are much prized.

Lady Mandeville cannot be described in negations; her qualities are all of a positive kind, and so much good and so much ill is said of her that she becomes interesting at once. She is clever and pretty, but has no taste in dress. She is an American, but has Spanish blood in her veins. She is called "the pretty Lady Mandeville"—but she is bewitching rather than pretty. She is a good musician, and very intimate with the greatest artists, especially in Paris.

Viscount Mandeville, her husband, is the eldest son of the Duke of Manchester. Viscount Mandeville has sat in Parliament as a

Conservative, but the reporters never seem to have noticed his presence. He is an excellent shot and a good horseman.

Lord Dudley, of whom more hereafter, went once to the House of Lords, on taking his seat, and made a short speech. Since then he has been so occupied with foreign princes, religion, pictures, social meetings, the opera, &c., that he has never found time to reappear there. He has a reputation for munificence, and a gigantic fortune.

Although paralyzed, Lord Dudley never misses a single representation at the Italian Opera during the season, and at his country houses he receives royal and princely guests. He possesses a remarkable gallery of pictures, and often lends his house to artists for their concerts.[1]

I have never known a more perfect woman than Lady Dudley, and I cannot speak of her without

[1] The sudden death of the Earl of Dudley took place while this work was in the press.

emotion. She is the petted child of London society. She is supremely beautiful, and admired by all who approach her; but no breath has dared to assail her reputation, and she has made her home noble and respected. Her devotion to her husband is sublime; she has never left him for an hour since he has been struck down by illness. With every great and noble quality she has also the more humble ones. Her power of organization is wonderful. She is an excellent manager, and understands business as well as any man.

The Earl of Dalhousie, commander of the *Britannia*, was a brave sailor, very remarkable on board ship; but he was so imprudent as to try and turn himself into a politician, and even his uprightness and the sincerity of his Liberal opinions have been powerless to secure his success. He has met with nothing but defeat in the political world. He is a very honourable man, and the worthy representative of an illustrious family. Like many other philanthropic landlords, Lord Dalhousie has

remitted the rents of his tenants in times of distress.

The Countess of Dalhousie is a very beautiful and bewitching woman, but she has one great defect; she is not natural. All her gestures, all her movements are artificial. Her want of tact, a social virtue which means keeping oneself in the background, has alienated many of her friends.

Lord Alington, whom his friends call "Bunny," bursts into a room like a gust of wind; he is the life and soul of society; he is gay, happy, sprightly, never without a bit of news, quite equal to inventing some if there is none to hand, and a capital story-teller. He is an inveterate sportsman, and divides his time between the turf, where he has hitherto won neither money nor popularity, and the meritorious task of amusing his friends. Disraeli called him "the champagne of society."

Lord and Lady Alington's dinners are the best given in London, except those of Lord and Lady Cadogan. The Prince of Wales is

a frequent guest at these banquets, and does honour to them with his heartiest appetite.

The Duchess of Manchester, who is known as *the* Duchess, was universally admitted to be the best-dressed woman in England, and her taste is certainly unrivalled. She has been one of the greatest beauties of the century, and well worthy of all the homage rendered her; for to the charms of her person she added intellectual powers. The few political gatherings she has held, such as the farewell dinner to Lord Dufferin, make me regret that she has not a political *salon*—it would be a Court and a Parliament in one.

The Duchess is both too prudent and too high-minded to speak ill of her neighbour. She excels in making other people talk without committing herself. She knows all Europe, and if her fortune allowed it, she would have the most varied and the most brilliant circle in the whole world.

The Duke, her husband, now passes a great

part of his life in Australia, and is known for the efforts he makes to amalgamate all the races of the British Empire. He is an ardent politician, with very decided views.

The Duke borrows his opinions from no one; they are all the offspring of his own mind, and he is wedded to them. He is frank, simple, without pride, without affectation of any kind, and a pleasant companion.

I shall conclude this letter with a few words respecting the Dowager Lady Aylesbury, or, as she is called in the English style, Maria, Marchioness of Aylesbury. This strange personage, who is much liked by the Princess of Wales, and indeed by the whole Court, possesses astounding energy. She is a human whirlwind, and has discovered the secret of perpetual motion; in fact, I am not sure that she is not to be found in two or three places at once. If a party were given without her, I believe she would instantly expire. She is more original than the great Irving and the astonishing Sims Reeves. Yet she is a true great lady, with a

kind heart and a generous hand, and much beloved. She knows everything, and amuses everybody; the mere sight of her is enough to drive away low spirits.

As soon as August begins, Lady Aylesbury has to start on the round of visits that fill her engagement-book, and for six months she goes from one country house to another, bringing life and animation wherever she appears, and making herself most welcome. Her seventy-four years have in no wise quenched her spirits.

But I must cease, or I shall fill a whole letter with Lady Aylesbury, and you would never stop me; she is so amusing.

FOURTH LETTER.

HER MAJESTY'S HOUSEHOLD.

INCLUSIVE of all the sinecures on the Civil List, nine hundred and thirty-one persons (not including domestics) are attached to the service of Queen Victoria. The mere enumeration of their titles is interesting. I will only take as a specimen the Lord Chamberlain's department. The noble lord is at the head of all the Queen's officers, except those belonging to the bedchamber. He has such a number of functions that he could not fulfil them if he were not provided with a strong staff of subalterns.

The happy occupier of this post is at present Lord Kenmare. Born a courtier and a Catholic,

Lord Kenmare is devoted to the Court and his creed. In politics he is still waiting for his opportunity. Lord Kenmare is an agreeable companion and a good shot, and knows how to be dignified when occasion requires.

The mission of the Vice-Chamberlain is to assist the Chamberlain; but he transfers this heavy burden to the Comptroller of Accounts, who passes it on to an inspector; the inspector gets it done by three clerks—aided by a number of assistant clerks. After the Chamberlain comes the Queen's treasurer and private secretary; the latter post is occupied by General Sir Henry Ponsonby, who is much liked and greatly respected. His position is a delicate and most important one, although its duties are accomplished in an unobtrusive manner that deprives them of public appreciation. Sir Henry Ponsonby was formerly one of Prince Albert's equerries. He is fifty-eight years of age, and has been the Queen's secretary for fifteen years, and for seven the keeper of her privy purse. The latter function entails a task on him which

he performs very conscientiously, viz. that of receiving all the petitions for relief addressed to her Majesty. About a thousand of these are admitted to consideration every year.

It may be said that Sir Henry Ponsonby is a power in the State; his perfect knowledge of the machinery of Government, and his not less valuable acquaintance with the character of the Queen, her wishes and her opinions, the necessity for all matters passing through his hands, have created an exceptional position for him, and give him great importance with the party in power. His opinion is always listened to, and he is often consulted about the matters to be submitted to the Queen.

The duties of a master of ceremonies, an assistant master, a marshal, eight aide-de-camps, eight lords-in-waiting, assisted by a number of supernumeraries, are to eat the Queen's dinners, and to make up a proper number at her table. Afterwards come four gentlemen ushers of the privy chamber, one black rod, three gentlemen ushers, with sub-

stitutes, who really do the work, four grooms of the privy chamber, who on grand occasions stand on the staircases or in corridors where the Queen is to pass, eight gentlemen ushers, and eight sergeants-at-arms. The master of ceremonies, General Sir Francis Seymour, was the attendant shadow of Prince Albert, and got the nickname of *Albertazzi*. He is a brave soldier whose sight was injured in the Crimea, so that ever since he has worn an eye-glass in one eye; this gives a stern appearance to the most amiable of men. Sir John Cowell, Master of the Queen's Household, is the former tutor of the Duke of Edinburgh, a man very much respected, and whom her Majesty calls "The Pope."

There are a crowd of other dignitaries, heralds, body-guards, pages, inspectors, the master of the tennis court, the Queen's boatman, the keeper of the swans, the grand falconer, &c. The list is so long that I must cut it short and hasten to speak of the ladies.

The ranks of the ladies-in-waiting, ladies of

the bedchamber, &c., are recruited from among the noblest families of the English aristocracy.

The Mistress of the Robes, whose prerogatives correspond to those of the Lord Chamberlain, and whose office must be conferred by the Government, is now the Duchess of Roxburghe, daughter-in-law to the Dowager Duchess, who is the Queen's most intimate friend. Afterwards come the maids of honour and ladies-in-waiting to her Majesty; her favourites among whom are the Dowager Marchioness of Ely, the Dowager Duchess of Athole, and Jane, Lady Churchill.

The Queen is much attached to the Marchioness of Ely.

The Duchess of Athole, a Scotchwoman, also stands high in the Royal favour.

Lady Churchill, who is a great favourite with the Queen, is a very distinguished and amiable person.

I will once more mention the Queen's faithful friend and adviser, the Duke of Richmond, for whom she has great esteem. In the world

the Duke and Duchess are not much known, for they mix but little in society; perhaps they feel themselves too old-fashioned for the present day.

One word in conclusion about a strange personage who may be seen every day taking his solitary walk in St. James's Park, and who believes himself to be the Duke of Gloucester. This old gentleman, who looks about eighty years of age, is wonderfully like George IV., and still wears the costume of that period. He says, with sincere conviction, and the greatest calmness, to anybody who will listen to him, that, as Duke of Gloucester, he ought to have succeeded William IV.; but that out of deference and gallantry, he has ceded his rights to Queen Victoria. Every year, on the Queen's birthday, he goes to Windsor, and some one belonging to the castle gives him a dinner in the best hotel of the place, when he drinks to the health of her Majesty with a gravity that is at once comical and touching. He is firmly convinced that at the death of the Queen he

is to ascend the throne. It may be, after all, that he has some sort of indirect relationship to the royal family. Except for this delusion he is perfectly sane, and he is allowed undisputed liberty.

FIFTH LETTER.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

Among those attached to the household of the Prince of Wales, I must mention the Marquis of Hamilton. Lady Hamilton, whose elegance of manner is proverbial, is especially intimate with the Princess of Wales. Lord and Lady Suffield are very much respected, and that is all I have to say about them.

Mr. Cockerell, one of the grooms of the bed-chamber, is a walking encyclopedia, and a wit, whose brilliant jokes would make a saint laugh. Four equerries are attached to the service of the Prince; two of these are Col. Stanley Clarke, who accompanies the Princess of Wales when she travels without her husband, and Col.

Ellis, erudite in all matters of taste. He is consulted on every question of improvement, decoration, ornamentation, furniture, hangings, &c., and is called "the artistic equerry."

Colonel Teesdale was in the Crimea, and gallantly defended Kars. Every year, on the anniversary of the siege, his health is drunk.

The fourth equerry is Mr. Wilson, a capital fellow and a delightful companion.

The Master of the Horse, Colonel Kingscote, is distinguished for his taste for agriculture. He is a very handsome man, very distinguished, and very pious.

His brother-in-law, the Duke of Beaufort, possesses the finest stud in England, and shall have a place in my letter on sport.

The Prince's librarian and German secretary, Herr Holzmann, is an earnest, learned man, who seldom speaks; but when he does, he is a most animated and amusing talker.

Mr. Francis Knollys may be called the fag of the Prince's household; he has to bear all the discontent and ill-humour of those who

have not succeeded in getting an invitation, or who have been refused some request. As private secretary to the Prince, he is supposed to be the willing instrument of all omissions and disappointments, while, in reality, the Prince keeps his own list, indicates the persons to be invited, and controls everything that is done in his name. Such a position as that held by Mr. Knollys is very difficult, and although he is goodness, kindness, and amiability personified, he has to bear a good deal of reproach.

The Prince has a few friends, among whom Mr. Charles Hall, Admiral Sir Harry Keppel, Mr. Christopher Sykes, Lord Charles Beresford, and Sir Charles Charrington are equally favoured.

Mr. Charles Hall is an excellent lawyer, but not exactly a courtier, in spite of his conscientious and persevering attempts to transform himself into one.

The gravest, and, at the same time, the most amusing man in the world, is Mr. Chris-

topher Sykes, the Prince's best and most faithful friend. His intense earnestness in the *Jeux innocents* which the royal pair much affect, is comical to the last degree, and nothing is so funny as his gravity. He is an indispensable person on every visiting-list, and not to know him would prove that you had never set foot in an English drawing-room. He is a great favourite with the ladies. He belongs to the best clubs, gives exquisite dinners and sumptuous entertainments at Doncaster, where his hospitality is unrivalled. If he has a defect, it is that he is too perfect a courtier; but that is his nature, and does not, I think, explain his constant melancholy; for his cordial appreciation by the Prince and Princess is well known.

Sir Dighton Probyn, comptroller and treasurer to the Prince, made a romantic marriage. He went to India, leaving behind a lady whom he loved, and when he returned to England thirty years later, he found her faithful to the memory of her early love, and

still willing to marry him. He was the first to decorate his house with the blue china that has since become so fashionable. He is a great sportsman and a perfect Hercules. At the time of the Prince's visit to India, a native showing some hostile intentions, Sir Dighton seized him by the throat, and hurled him out of the crowd.

The Princess of Wales, as I have already said, has Miss Knollys for her lady-in-waiting and particular friend. Among the other ladies of her household I will only mention Lady Macclesfield, on account of an anecdote that I wish to tell you. When the first child of the Princess was expected, preparations had been made at Marlborough House, but the event took place rather prematurely while the Princess was at Frogmore. She had been out looking at the skaters, when she was taken suddenly ill. There was neither nurse nor doctor at hand, and Lady Macclesfield had to act as both until a doctor was procured from Windsor.

All the Queen's children are fond of the

theatre, and go there frequently. The Prince and Princess of Wales may be said to be the special patrons of the drama, for they take much interest in it, and give it their countenance and support. During a representation the Prince is absorbed in the piece. The Princess is less interested, and divides her attention between the stage and the house.

SIXTH LETTER.

THE PRIME MINISTER.

In order to form a correct opinion of Mr. Gladstone, whom his fanatical admirers have named "the Grand Old Man," and the working classes call "the People's William," it is necessary not only to study his remarkable character in its successive phases and in the alternations of government and opposition, but also to complete one's observation by a supplementary judgment of his rival, Lord Beaconsfield. It is impossible to speak of the one without speaking of the other, and their antagonism, which is imputed to party rivalry, really originated in the diversity of two natures, marked by moral and physical contrasts, which must

necessarily have forced them into opposite lines of action.

Lord Beaconsfield, thin, slender, and aristocratic, a single lock of hair on his forehead, his eyes dimmed with weariness and thought, his mouth contracted by painful struggles and lost illusions, had the languid gait of a man whose strength has been exhausted by incessant mental activity. Mr. Gladstone, on the contrary, has bold features, a grand, commanding brow, an air of authority, a resolute mien; yet, strange to say, although he is often carried away by irresistible impulses, he has not the boldness of his adversary. His opinions are moderate, his projects prudent. His experience of affairs makes him very useful in all questions of home politics. But he has no flights of fancy; he follows the march of events and looks on at the accomplishment of a fact as a scientific man watches the development of a germ, in order to classify it. In short, he has no creative power. He does not direct politics, but submits to them

like the mass of mankind, and thus he is logically driven to conform to the ruling opinion of the nation. He is a genuine opportunist, and it has been said of him that he is a mixture of Cromwell and Gambetta.

Mr. Gladstone is not, like Lord Salisbury, the apostle of a definite fixed opinion, nor like Mr. Bright, the advocate of change of opinion so soon as a better has been found; but at heart and unconsciously, he is governed by this latter theory of pure opportunism. He follows the stream, without ever being above it, like Mr. Bright, or below it, like Lord Salisbury. He excels in giving a legislative form to the policy adopted by the nation, in establishing order among complex and multiplied details, and in producing from them a clear, skilfully drawn-up whole, and in getting it accepted by Parliament by dint of his inexhaustible resources of explanation and argument.

Instead of governing the country by Parliament, he governs Parliament by the country.

He has a great mind, is always eager to learn,

capable of confessing his past errors with candour, and avowing his incompetency in questions that he has not studied; he willingly accepts advice (Stuart Mill was much valued by him), and he listens to that of Mr. Bright. He loves progress, possesses a certain enthusiasm for humanity, is a great partisan of Free Trade, of equality of religions and sects, of a wide extension of the suffrage, and independent voting. He is patient and scrupulous, indefatigable in agitation. In the latter he resembles Gambetta. His eloquence is impulsive, grand, powerful, bitter, and merciless to all the errors of his opponents. But all the qualities which he displays in opposition seem to vanish the moment he assumes power. In grave questions he then appears undecided and ambiguous, the extreme fluency of his speeches cannot conceal the confusion of his ideas, nor any amount of vehemence cover the real hesitation of his mind. Very fertile in resources, and always ready to vindicate himself, he has the support of the people, but rather from taste

and instinctive liking than from any well-founded admiration. He has been called a Revolutionary, but that he is not; and he has also been accused, though falsely, of being at the same time a friend of the Jesuits and the Internationalists. It has even been said that he was a mysterious link between those two enemies of Church and State.

He is an honest man, without any regard for parties, uninfluenced by personal considerations. His noble, upright life was formerly rigidly ruled by sincere convictions; but into the rectitude of his intelligence, into the loftiness of his soul, popularity has cast strange elements that have diverted him from his original path. Proud and irritable, even haughty, too conscious of his own great worth, he has gradually fallen into exclusiveness, has become devoted to system, and intolerant, so that his patriotism, hitherto so pure, has been impaired.

The rather limited horizon of his ideas would have made him the head of a party that was stationary, or only slowly dragged along by the

current of progress. He would have been an apostle of calm and abnegation, a resolute partisan of social and political economy. This unrivalled financier, but a Scotchman—and consequently with narrow views on economic questions—was he really the man whom the Liberals should have chosen, and entrusted with the vast destinies of their programme?

His adversaries dispute his right to the title of statesman, and assert that his intellectual weight as a scholar and a philosopher preponderates over his powers as a ruler; that his politics are theoretical, whilst Lord Beaconsfield's were practical; that his success is due to his eloquence, his dexterity in Parliamentary conflict, and his sympathetic manners.

In serious struggles, when his interest or that of his party is at stake, he can condense his arguments, usually too diffuse, and make a concise speech. When he wants to elude a direct reply, few men can wander from the point more cleverly than he. With less subtlety, less skill, less power of oratory, many

of his mistakes would have been avoided. Facility of expression is with him a dangerous gift; his language is elevated, majestic, and, except in a few rare cases, vague, without precision. It is veiled in a kind of cloud that deceives the orator himself as well as his audience. He has been sometimes known to lose himself in digressions so foreign to the matter in hand that he has suddenly taken refuge in arguments flagrantly contradictory of his fundamental doctrines. So that he arrives at the demonstration he is seeking, the means by which he gets there matter little to him; thus his conclusions are sometimes a total inversion of his propositions. He has also often injured his own cause, and both his enemies and his friends are justified in their judgment on him. Earl Russell, whom he replaced as head of the Liberal party, accused him of having, by his foreign policy, "tarnished the national honour, injured the national interests, and lowered the national character." He is also reproached with never

knowing at what resolution to stop, and with being the dangerous chameleon of a party. Many members of that party repudiate his policy.

Lord Beaconsfield was especially pitiless to him, and defined him as "a sophistical rhetorician, inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity, and gifted with an egotistical imagination that can at all times command an interminable, an inconsistent series of arguments to malign his opponents and to glorify himself." It is a curious thing that he is generally reproached with the want of sagacity of which he accused the French nation in the articles that he wrote during the war of 1870. What cannot be disputed is his personal worth, his marvellous scientific acquirements, his profound and skilful writings, which place him in the first rank of scholars, thinkers, and authors. At twenty-three years of age, after a journey in Italy, the first essays that he published were so remarkable that they awakened general sympathy and attention.

In this portrait many harsh estimates of a man who is yet worshipped like a demi-god are reproduced. Let us try to disentangle the true faults, amid the rancour and jealousy of party. Here comes naturally the *chassé-croisé* of the two policies, and of the two ministers who have in turn governed England since 1868. In the beginning, the present chief of the Whigs was a Tory, and Lord Beaconsfield, who afterwards became the leader of the Tories, was a Liberal. Mr. Gladstone called himself a Conservative, but he deceived himself; Liberalism was the very groundwork of his character, and in his first writings, full of warmth and enthusiasm, it is impossible not to detect the inevitableness of a speedy conversion. His companion, who travelled with him in Italy, said at the time, "The depth of Radicalism that unconsciously exists in this young head cannot be doubted." His conversion was only the sudden discovery of his true tendencies.

Can the same be said of Lord Beaconsfield,

then simply Mr. Disraeli? It must be admitted that it cannot. In the middle of an election, seeing that his Liberal candidature in Kent was going to be a failure, he boldly went and offered himself to the Conservatives of another county. The audaciousness of the thing was complete, but Mr. Gladstone's adversary never hesitated at any act of audacity or startling boldness. He then wore long ringlets, and was bedizened with jewellery. Handsome, and a "dandy," he pleased the aristocracy by his elegant manners and charmed them by his romantic style. Feeling himself more at home in this circle, where he was warmly welcomed and helped on, he never again quitted it. Mr. Disraeli always mingled a little charlatanism with his politics, or let us rather say, a little romanticism. He made a kind of literature which enchanted the foolish and added to his prestige by adorning common things with grand words. You will remember the sonorous phrase that he brought back from the Congress of Berlin, "Peace with Honour!"

Up to this point the advantage is with Mr. Gladstone; let us now enter into the details of the political career of the present Prime Minister, and see him at work. His political horizon is bounded by the United Kingdom; beyond the British Isles he can see nothing. The famous doctrine of non-intervention, which for the last forty years has been preached in Europe, never had a more valiant champion than Mr. Gladstone, except, perhaps, Louis Philippe. His contempt for foreign policy has made him sacrifice the interests of his country abroad. He is not an admirer of the colonial power of Great Britain, he says so frankly to any one who will listen to him, and a few years ago he ventured to write in the *Nineteenth Century* that "the turn of America had come, and that England must resign herself to descend to the level of Holland."

His foreign policy, founded on such principles, was bound to be logical; in fact it is summed up in its chief features by the loss of the Transvaal and Afghanistan, by the strained

relations with Europe, estranged by him, and by his disastrous campaign in Egypt. All this is indeed the work of a non-interventionist, but also of a weak strategist in the conflict of nations.

Mr. Gladstone has been more successful in his home government. He has skilfully reconciled public needs and taxation; he has abolished the disgraceful "purchase" system that reflected upon the honour of the British army. He has opposed drunkenness by a law severely enforced, although still insufficient, on the hours of closing public-houses. He sent the Prince of Wales to India to soothe the legitimate discontent and to rekindle the sympathies of a people whom his pity, too slowly moved, had left to struggle with a terrible famine.

Ireland owes to him a most equitable measure, the disestablishment of a Protestant Church in a Catholic country.

Among the real reforms of Mr. Gladstone may be cited the Franchise Bills. By giving

the right of voting even to the lowest strata of the population, and by resting the vote on the basis of taxation and of property, he has infused fresh blood into the effete body of electors.

His administration has not been always free from tentative efforts, and here, as elsewhere, there are inconsistencies to record. He has, therefore, not been spared proposed votes of censure. In 1872 he escaped one with some difficulty, when the indignant House accused him of having violated the laws, and exercised patronage in the nomination of Sir Robert Collier to the Judical Committee of the Privy Council. He was accused the following month by the Parliament and by the University of violating the statutes by appointing the Rev. W. W. Harvey to the Rectory of Ewelme. Some of his tergiversations are flagrant. After having strongly opposed the admission of Jews to Parliament, he strongly supported the Bill that Lord Russell brought forward a few months later to admit them. Shortly after a magnificent discourse in favour of liberty of

speech, he adjured the House, on the 17th of June, 1880, to refuse it to Mr. O'Donnell, who wished to put a question to the Government concerning the new French Ambassador, M. Challemel-Lacour. How many times after having made a vote a Cabinet question has he submitted to do without it and to remain in power!

Unlike Count Bismarck, he does not possess the art of ruling men whom he fears, or who may offer some opposition to his policy; so he lulls them into security and deceives them.

Mr. Gladstone may be summed up in a few words. He is excellent in home government, but fatal in foreign affairs.

With his intimate friends he is a charming talker; he listens, and speaks with grace and discretion, and even when he has a right to make an assertion on some learned question, he does it without pedantry.

This old man of seventy-five still wields the woodman's axe in his moments of leisure, and one of his little vanities, often mentioned, is to

cut down a tree in the presence of his guests at Hawarden. He is frequently presented with an axe.

He is a sturdy pedestrian, thinks little of walking ten or twelve miles, and, in spite of dynamitards, goes about the streets of London on foot. A short time ago he was nearly run over while helping a blind man to cross Piccadilly.

SEVENTH LETTER.

THE MINISTRY.

THE contention that always existed between Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone assumed epic proportions at certain moments. Rather more than five years ago Lord Beaconsfield, thinking he held the country in his hand, fancied the time well chosen for dissolving Parliament and calling a general election. He was so certain of finding himself called to the head of affairs for the next seven years, that he forced that conviction on the minds of two very different men, Prince Bismarck and M. Gambetta.

Two women only, Mme. de Novikoff, in Moscow, and Mme. Adam, in Paris, predicted

Mr. Gladstone's triumph, in spite of his personal doubts. Mme. de Novikoff founded her opinion on the conviction that the thirty-two seats lost by the Liberal party during Mr. Gladstone's last administration could not be definitely lost. Lord Beaconsfield forgot that in 1874 his victory was due to the fact that "beer" and "Bible," that is the army of publicans and the not less formidable army of sectarians, had made common cause with each other. The former yielded to an impulse of ill-humour; the latter, tired of the Liberals, who had irritated them by the Education Bill and the School Board, wanted to try the Conservatives. Mme. Adam, at the time of Mr. Gladstone's visit to Paris, said, in a conversation with him at M. de Girardin's, that Lord Beaconsfield would be led to make the election on an Imperial question, and that whatever sophistry was employed, England would never understand monarchy except in the royal form. At the conclusion of this interview, Mme. Adam had a discussion, on the same subject with M. Gambetta, who

was supporting the cause of Lord Beaconsfield in the *République Française*, as Prince Bismarck was doing at Berlin.

"You are wrong," said M. Gambetta, "to support Mr. Gladstone; he will be beaten to a mummy."

"I believe in Mr. Gladstone's success," she asserted, "and I maintain it in all that I write. Besides, I run much less risk with him than you do with Lord Beaconsfield. If Mr. Gladstone is beaten, I am beaten with a Liberal, that is to say, with a friend. If you are beaten with Lord Beaconsfield, that is much more serious; for you are beaten with an enemy."

At the moment of the elections a sudden change took place in public opinion. Mr. Gladstone aroused the Liberal North, and carried it along with him. Orators of his party devoted themselves to magnifying to the electors the errors of the Ministers in power, a very easy task, and one that seldom fails of its effect.

The Tory orators themselves, those who felt the loss of their votes, lent their aid. Truths

kept secret during the sessions of Parliament were disclosed by the malcontents, and the Liberals asserted that their enemies, by not contradicting their assertions, confirmed the truth of them. The sores of the State thus laid bare converted a certain number of voters, and the Liberals were victorious.

Lord Beaconsfield died a short time afterwards of grief at finding himself abandoned by his party.

Mr. Gladstone, called to form a Ministry, found himself face to face with the bravos who had fought for him, and now held out their hand, claiming their share of the spoil. The formation of a Cabinet, in presence of the avidity of parties, was very difficult. It was necessary to satisfy the centre, the left, and the Radicals. Sir Charles Dilke, the most popular among the Radicals, was thought of; but it was perceived that Chamberlain, the Republican, an ally of Sir Charles Dilke, had already been admitted. Sir Charles Dilke ceded the place, but was brought in later, when the Cabinet had pro-

gressed so far that several of its members were left behind it.

These desertions were, the Duke of Argyll, who refused his assent to measures tending to injure landed proprietors; Mr. Forster, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who would not sanction the Government's purchasing obedience to the law; Mr. Bright, who disagreed with Mr. Gladstone on the Eastern Question.

The Ministry may be said to be entirely composed of men of mark. Lord Beaconsfield nearly always surrounded himself with incompetent nonentities, who were eclipsed by his genius, and who, if they were not able assistants, had at least the advantage of being obedient auxiliaries.

Mr. Gladstone, surrounded by men of worth and resolution, whom he cannot eject, governed by the necessities of parties, driven into a corner by the princes of finance, who have their tools even in the ministerial ranks, finds both resources and obstacles around him; but as he is as authoritative as his rival, he sometimes comes

into conflict with persons who refuse to obey him. The First Lord of the Treasury, or Prime Minister, is, however, the highest expression of the executive power. All the departments are under his control, even the nominations made by other members of the Cabinet.

The essence of the Cabinet being liberal, and the Government, by the natural force of things, becoming more and more democratic, the mind of its members, ruled by individualism, resists its chief.

The struggle for power between the present Prime Minister and Lord Beaconsfield always turned upon the laws of Franchise. In 1857, Mr. Gladstone had proposed a reform, but he took care to formulate it in such a fashion as not to include factory hands, whose votes were usually acquired by the Conservative party. Disraeli, a shrewd politician, beating his adversary with his own weapons, proposed to extend the Bill, and thus, in a sense, made it more Liberal, and gave himself all the honour of the reform, while it served the interests of

his party. Mr. Gladstone has just taken his revenge; to divert attention from his unfortunate foreign policy, he has profited by the agitation which stirs the masses from one end of England to the other.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs is Lord Granville, and before speaking of him, I must tell you a curious fact. In England, just as the First Lord of the Admiralty is never an admiral, nor the Secretary of State for War a general, so the head of the Foreign Office is never an ambassador, and has never represented his country in the capitals of Europe. Thus the English Minister, not having any experience acquired on the spot, is ill-acquainted with the home politics of other countries. It is true that this leaves him more independent, but perhaps it is one of the causes of the political egotism with which England is reproached.

Lord Granville is a bond of union between parties, which he knows how to conciliate, between the colonies and the metropolis, which he has closely united, between England and Europe,

whose relations he has greatly improved. He is to be thanked for the cessation of the busy-body policy of Lord Palmerston, with his mania for constant interference, and for having withdrawn into a wise reserve. He is a man of the world, even in politics, and has been called "the minister of good manners," the "court politician," and the "drawing-room statesman;" he has a gentle, caressing voice that he never raises or forces even when saying the hardest and most cutting things; he never takes a combative tone, even to disarm or stab an adversary. He uses the weapon of speech with affability, almost with solicitude; he insinuates a sarcasm, or inflicts a censure, with perfect courtesy; no one knows better than he how to oil the machinery of politics, and treat difficult affairs with perfect grace. He is a man of prompt and decisive action, who can get rid of useless obstacles at a blow; he is just and firm, and to his slow patience, nearly allied to genius, he owes his success as a diplomatist and as Liberal leader of the Upper House. His

eloquence is not admirable, nor is his learning extraordinary, but his conciliatory qualities give him an exceptional place wherever he goes.

Lady Granville is a very great lady. She is seen to the greatest advantage on the evenings of the receptions at the Foreign Office, when at the top of the grand staircase she receives with a stately curtsey thousands of guests, for the most part unknown to her. Then she is really beautiful, with her grand air, heightened by her official position—this statuesque part suits her admirably.

It is true that Lord Granville is all kindness and gallantry; he is attentive to every one and attracts the sympathies of all; his exquisite manners, his witty conversation, make him as attractive as if he were half a century younger.

Lord Derby, who presides over the destinies of the Colonies, owes his position to his immense fortune. He cannot be accused of having disturbed the political situation by any brilliant feats. He is clever, and works very

hard; he asserted in 1864 that the Foreign Office gave him ten hours' work a day. Since then, to do unto himself what, as a Liberal, he desired should be done unto other workers, he has shortened his hours of labour, and has much relaxed his efforts. · Lord Derby makes good speeches, but they must be read to be appreciated; for his voice is inaudible in the Senate. He has good sense, and, still more, good luck; for if he had come into office at a moment of difficulty he would never have been noticed, His political career, however, began in 1848, when the people, tired of great men and popular causes, only wanted to "rest and be thankful." The public opinion accepted this unobtrusive person, who believes in nothing in particular, and is too prudent and even too timid ever to raise a question. If he had come in at any other moment, he would not have won the prestige that belongs to success in youth. He is a Liberal-Conservative, or, rather, a sceptical Conservative become Liberal. The steps that he has descended in joining the Opposition for-

bid his ever mounting the highest rungs of the political ladder. The Radicals distrust him, and the moderate Liberals prefer Lord Hartington and Lord Granville. He can help to increase the popularity of a Liberal Ministry if he makes part of it, or help in its downfall if he breaks away from it; but he can never be at the head of it. His long intimacy with Bright has always remained an inexplicable mystery, unless it is their common passion for angling that has united them. Well-read, but without literary tastes, he takes more interest in science than in literature. He has an excellent memory, and never forgets a face that he has once seen. He detests talent, and ruthlessly tramples on those of his subordinates who display any intellectual superiority. His creeds are elastic and doubtful; he smokes and drinks, but he is a bad rider and no sportsman. He has declined the Order of the Garter.

The Marquis of Hartington, Minister of War, and future Duke of Devonshire, was chosen as leader of the Liberals when Mr. Gladstone re-

tired. He has a certain influence which then seemed likely to increase, but has not done so. His uprightness, his courage in manifesting his opinions, give him weight; he will never make a great figure. He is not an orator, never excites enthusiasm; he lacks humour, never jokes; and in the reports of his speeches the stereotyped "laughter" never appears. He uses sincere and ingenious arguments, but does not succeed in convincing his hearers. His mind is vigorous and honest, but his nature is dry and cold.

In society he is sometimes observed to laugh, but he was not made for the fashionable world, and he does not care to make himself agreeable in it. He is recognized everywhere by the way he wears his hat, forced down over his eyes.

Sir Charles Dilke is the Gambetta of England: his clamorous beginning, his appeals to the Republic, will be remembered. But on taking his share of the heavy burden of power he shook off some of his principles, and of his radicalism has retained only a few advanced

opinions on agrarian questions, matters of education, and separation of Church and State. He made a great noise to frighten people, and they were afterwards very much obliged to him for having reassured them.

A clever politician, a man with real governing power, Sir Charles Dilke is one of those men who become greater as they rise, and he will be one of those who make England illustrious. He has become very diplomatic, and makes evasive answers so cleverly, that they are quite models in their way. Courteous to his adversaries, fortunate in his undertakings, an advocate of peace, he enjoys general esteem. An indefatigable worker in all matters of thought, a highly-informed man with just views and sound judgment, he has written some remarkable works, especially "Greater Britain," an unrivalled book on the Colonies.

The President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Chamberlain, is a Radical Republican of a similar tone to M. Clemenceau; and Mr. Gladstone has taken him into the Cabinet to

secure the large majority that he has at his disposal, and to flatter an adversary who was more dangerous in his place in the House than in the council of the Ministers. However, in spite of his official position he has not feared to ask for an appeal to the people, to settle the question of the separation of Church and State. In Parliament he is ill at ease, but before his constituents he recovers himself, and nothing can be more curious, I will even say amusing, as it is not of our own country I am speaking, than to hear a Minister make revolutionary speeches. His programme is brief and definite; universal suffrage, equality of electoral districts, remuneration of members of Parliament, and disestablishment of the Church. Mr. Chamberlain has no political past, and his fall may be as sudden as his elevation. He has made many enemies while in office; his Bankruptcy Bill was not a success; he has offended the ship-owners, who detest him; he is an embarrassment to the Ministry, unpopular among the working classes, and

looked upon with suspicion by members of the Church.

And yet he is a charming man, very amiable, and much liked in society. He loves flowers, and what flowers do you suppose? The most beautiful, the most aristocratic, the most rare and costly—orchids! He cultivates every variety at his country house, and has one of the finest collections in Europe.

The Home Secretary, Sir W. Vernon Harcourt, a former journalist, is known for his articles signed "Historicus," which provoked America. He treats his opponents with supreme indifference. A decided Liberal, and enjoying a certain popularity in Parliament, he has a strong intellect, and is keen and witty. Very agreeable in society, a living collection of anecdotes, he has a political *salon* of no great importance.

Lord Selborne, Lord High Chancellor and President of the Upper House, is like the poets who live with their feet on earth and their head in heaven, a man of exalted piety, of

austere virtue. His pure disinterestedness in the midst of the pettiness and meanness of parties, makes him resemble Mr. Chamberlain's orchids that grow on the rugged bark of trees, and whose bed is made of broken crockery.

I have already spoken of Lord Spencer, the Viceroy of Ireland. The Irish do justice to his manly qualities, even though they resist his policy. He is an excellent administrator, and a man of honour.

Mr. Childers, Chancellor of the Exchequer, began by being First Lord of the Admiralty, which is a kind of trial or apprenticeship for the Ministry. He is put forward on all grand occasions. He holds himself upright, and has a very imposing deportment; he wears a handsome white beard.

Lord Northbrook, First Lord of the Admiralty, recently went to India, of which country he once was Viceroy, but he did not find any opportunity of distinguishing himself there. He belongs to the honourable house of Baring. As a Minister

there is nothing exceptional about him but his receptions. Lord Northbrook is a widower, and Lady Emma Baring, his charming daughter, does the honours of the Admiralty.

The new Postmaster-General, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, is an excellent speaker, one of the best and strongest champions of the Government, one of the most formidable adversaries of the Lords because of the justice and clearness of his arguments; but he will not efface the memory of Mr. Fawcett, his very clever predecessor.

Mr. Mundella, Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, whose functions closely correspond to those of our Minister of Public Instruction, was, as a child, a poor factory boy, earning three-and-sixpence a week. Now he is a Minister of merit; his knowledge certainly has some gaps in it, but he can take the initiative, and has views of his own. His thoughts, sometimes a little obscure, have the freshness, the flavour, the healthy aroma of a fruit that has not been forced in an artificial soil.

Lastly comes Mr. Trevelyan, the nephew of Macaulay, ex-Secretary of State for Ireland, and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. In the present Ministry, he is the type of the man who is always ready. He is prepared at any moment to speak with intelligence and authority on no matter what subject. My horoscope of him is that he will one day be leader of the Liberals and Prime Minister. An active, restless politician, he has a passion for work, and his life is not long enough for all his occupations. He succeeds in everything he touches (except in Ireland), and, therefore, people take advantage of this, and overwhelm him with work. Always talking, writing, interrogating, moving, running, walking, persuading, organizing, this valuable politician, who is not yet forty-six years old, writes, reads, makes speeches, indites leaders for newspapers, issues manifestoes and addresses, finds remedies for everything, and employs all his skill in getting them applied. He supports every Bill that tends to the suppression of alcoholic drinks.

EIGHTH LETTER.

PARLIAMENT—THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

In Parliament the antagonism between Whigs and Tories, Liberals and Conservatives, has lost its primitive simplicity; the Liberals have produced the Radical party, and the Conservatives have to reckon with what is called the Fourth party.

Besides these groups, the two latest of which will one day be the most important, the Parliamentary battles of the future being bound to take place between the Radicals and the Fourth party, there has been growing up in Parliament an obstructionist or Irish party.

The old Tories are disappearing. The former Lord Derby was considered to be their last

representative, but Lord Salisbury may more truly be called the latest survivor of that great party. There will always be Conservatives, but there will never be Tories any more. The new generation is trying to effect a reconciliation with members in the ranks of the enemy, and to form a mixed party that may be called Conservative-Liberal, a centre which will become a force in the state, and that already includes Lord Derby and Lord Sherbrooke among the Peers, Mr. Goschen and Mr. Forster in the Commons, and a good many dissenters from the extreme of both parties.

Lord Randolph Churchill will probably soon join this battalion, for he is in opposition to many of his own party, and may be inscribed on the evolutionary list as a Radical-Conservative.

I should not be surprised if he met Sir Charles Dilke in this centre party one day; for being a Radical at the outset, but already left behind by the irreconcilables, he has wisely planted his tent among the Liberals.

In this centre the independent members are found, those who have a personal ambition, and who do not seek for favours. Capitalists and brewers belong to it. Nearly all those who sell alcoholic beverages are Conservatives, while teetotalers are generally Liberal: beer is Conservative; tea, Liberal.

We also find gravitating towards this centre undecided members who are seeking their way, and still hesitate between the attractions of the two parties.

You do not expect me, I imagine, to explain to you what separates Liberals from Conservatives. To define their limits is quite beyond my power, and I have never known an English elector who could explain to me rationally why he belonged to one party rather than to the other. Liberal does not mean Republican, and many people are Conservative who have nothing to "conserve." The more I see of their operations, the less am I able to distinguish between them, especially from the views of their representatives. There is rather a difference of per-

sonal opinion, and of political antagonism, than of questions of reform and of true national interest, and the proof of this is that the two parties when in power obtain identical results.

If one were to draw up a list of the differences and similarities of opinion of Whigs and Tories in the past, and the means employed by each for getting up agitation, earnest methodical England, and the admirable English Parliamentary system, that so far surpasses all European Parliaments, would become subjects of universal amusement. English parties are saved from being regarded with ridicule not by the width of the gulf that separates them, but by the passion that leading men infuse into politics, and the gigantic efforts they make. That passion and those efforts inspire the people with the idea that the obstacle between the two representative parties is terribly difficult to clear.

I understand the feeling of caste in the Conservative party, and the interest the aristocracy have in maintaining their privileges. No doubt

they can gain nothing by overthrowing the past, and destroying every vestige of it; but a Conservative publican appears to me highly comical, unless the said publican is the happy but unenviable recipient of electioneering favours. Colonial expansion, springing from internal difficulties, and furnishing a source of coveted employment, makes the basis of Tory politics. Liberals are supposed to represent social reforms and the Democratic part of the nation.

As I have mentioned the Fourth party, I must tell you what it is: about five years ago, a party of advanced young Conservatives constituted and established itself. Disgusted by the increasing degeneracy of the Old Tory party, after the defection of Sir Robert Peel, and irritated at the oligarchical tyranny of Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Richard Cross, and their associates—Lord Randolph Churchill and a few of his friends resolved to throw off the yoke. They set energetically to work, traced out a line of conduct, and heroically bore the

combined attack of their adversaries and of their furious co-Conservatives, and gained a victory over Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Forster, and the Chairman of Committees. At the end of the session they had taken up their position; the oligarchy was destroyed; the old Tories had thenceforth to reckon with the young ones; the Fourth Party was formed. The principal members were Lord Randolph Churchill, its creator and leader; Sir Drummond Wolff, —a skilful diplomatist; Mr. Balfour, a hard worker, and the resolute champion of property; and Mr. Gorst, an organizer and a lawyer. Mr. Balfour has lately shown some signs of falling off; but whatever happens, the Conservative party of the future has a name, it is called a Conservative Democracy.

The present Speaker of the House of Commons is the son of the great Sir Robert Peel, who brought about the abolition of the corn laws, the first great triumph of free trade. Other candidates have been rejected for various reasons, and Mr. Goschen, who had some chance,

refused the post of honour, in order to preserve his independence. Mr. Peel is a moderate Liberal; he had not made himself known as a politician, and was not worn out. For nineteen years he has paid unwearied attention to the Secretary's work of the different ministries, and he is thoroughly acquainted with official business. He is a wise, earnest man, without any personal ambition, full of tact and energy, and firm without obstinacy. His impartiality commands respect, and the only reproach that can be directed against him resembles praise: it is, that from the strength of his convictions, and his perfect independence, he is not accommodating, and that he carries firmness to the point of disdain for its results.

Sir Stafford Northcote, the leader of the Conservatives, is no longer young, and the moment is approaching when he must cede his place. If Mr. Edward Stanhope's health permitted, although he is thought too modest, he would be designated as the successor of a superannuated chief. But a star of the first

magnitude is appearing in the Conservative party, Lord George Hamilton. He is thirty-nine years of age, and is well thought of by all sections of the Conservatives; he is distinguished in manners, but, above all, he is the favourite of Lord Salisbury, whose voice is predominant in matters regarding the internal organization of the party. In the ranks there is also Sir Hardinge S. Giffard, a lawyer of great merit; his talents elevated him to the post of Solicitor-General under the late Government. I doubt whether he will ever make a statesman; but on the other hand, he is a practical orator, and might be chosen.

There is also Mr. Gibson, but he is an Irishman and a lawyer; it is true that Lord Cairns, who was on the point of becoming the leader of the Conservative Lords, was also a lawyer and an Irishman. Mr. Gibson is still young; he is clever and energetic, a man of tact and moderation, although every inch a Conservative. Lord Salisbury can scarcely surpass him in eloquence, and he has the art of rousing enthusiasm.

The Liberal party, if it were to lose Mr. Gladstone, would not lack leaders. The person at present most clearly designated for that dignity is the Marquis of Hartington,—a faint reflection of his chief. Among the Radicals, it would not be difficult to replace Mr. Chamberlain, and the obstructionists have any number of leaders.

In the Parliamentary drama, many curious scenes are enacted: if Liberal malcontents are seen drawing near to the Conservatives, more than one Conservative will make his court to Mr. Gladstone, to obtain a "shelf" in the Upper House; for it is at the suggestion of the Prime Minister that the Queen creates peers. On the other hand, the strength of the Tories often comes from the weakness of the Liberal leaders, who are secretly their allies. Mr. Goschen has frequently saved the Conservatives from themselves. Political evolution is perfectly admitted, and most of the politicians who have become Prime Ministers have sat on both sides of the House. One of the most curious cases

of political evolution is that of Mr. Marriott, member for Brighton, who, not being able to settle himself comfortably on the left, suddenly declared that he was deserting the Liberal, and going to fight under the Conservative banner. He therefore resigned his seat, and presented himself again before his constituents; and now comes the extraordinary part of the story, the electors had changed their opinions with him, and they re-elected him.

Another parliamentary curiosity is patronage. A patron recruits volunteers and attaches them to himself by paying the expenses of their election, and their votes then belong to him. The late Earl Fitz-William commanded fifteen of these mercenaries.

Among the Irish obstructionists, some look upon the position of a member of Parliament as lucrative; for having settled the question of emoluments in their own favour, they receive a salary from their constituents. This explains why Mr. Parnell is assailed by the offer of service from so many aspirants to

membership, and these requests are not made only by patriots of the "sister isle," but frequently also by Radical cockneys. This is not at all displeasing to Mr. Parnell: he considers their assistance less dangerous to the Irish cause than that of the red-hot politicians of his own country.

I have already described Mr. Gladstone's attitude in Parliament; his eloquence does not always carry by main force the bills that he presents, and when he is not followed in a question his adversaries and even his friends show him no pity; but an adverse vote scarcely seems to touch him. In the sittings of the 26th and 27th of April, 1883, he was beaten over and over again by a powerful majority; but this did not disturb him at all. On the 12th of May, 1882, he even sustained a total defeat, after having threatened to dissolve the House; but when beaten and driven into a corner about the dissolution, he put it off and resigned himself to the facts.

He leaves his colleagues the initiative in their

several departments; but in general politics he directs them absolutely.

The labours of the English Parliament are very severe, two hours of each sitting are wasted in questions asked by members who are longing to read their own names next morning in the local newspaper, and want to prove to their constituents that they are something more than voting machines.

This Government has been almost entirely occupied with Ireland and Egypt. A whole session was devoted to the Irish Land Bill; another was taken up by the Bill on Electoral Reform, and probably the whole of the present year will not suffice for the Redistribution of Seats Bill.

Side by side with these bills there are always laws in suspense that have been presented every session for an indefinite period. Such, for example, is the "Deceased Wife's Sister Bill."

It would be idle to enumerate all the projected laws that are waiting for the sanction of Parlia-

ment, from the Decimal System and Woman's Suffrage to Municipal Reform and a bill on the Navy; but the most urgent of all, and the one that would most expedite the solution of the others would be the reform of Parliament itself, for in its present condition its operation is almost paralyzed. An amusing bill, brought forward at least once a year, is for the abolition of the grating in front of the Ladies' Gallery. Parliamentary debates being private, and "strangers" having no right to be present, a member can always have a gallery cleared by calling the attention of the Speaker to the fact that there are "strangers" present. In order not to subject the Ladies' Gallery to this, it was hidden by a grating. Once more, by 131 votes against 75, the House has rejected the Bill. This arrangement only exists in the House of Commons, the Lords are not so easily agitated by the sight of fair faces. I will mention the customary white-bait dinner which every year brings the members of parliament to Greenwich at the close of the summer session. At this

dinner arose the symbolic custom of giving a wooden spoon to the minister who, during the year, had been involved in the fewest divisions in the House of Commons.

NINTH LETTER.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

If you have observed the conflict that arose last year between the House of Lords and the House of Commons, you are aware that nothing could exceed the unpopularity of the former. Public feeling amounted almost to exasperation, and for a time the cry threatened to be, "Down with the House of Lords!" All opposition offered by the House of Lords to the House of Commons assumes, as you can easily understand, irritating proportions; for their conflicts are not questions of vulgar matters, of the balance of the Budget, the imposition of taxes, the voting of supply, &c. The Lower House decides all that in its own right, and even makes and unmakes

ministries. The function of the Upper House is therefore limited to the accepting or rejecting of laws passed by the House of Commons; but these are vital organic questions which concern the interest of classes and provoke the most violent party strife.

Once more, the accusation was brought against the Lords by the majority of English people, "They have learnt nothing, and forgotten nothing." How could they forget, in rejecting the bill for electoral reform, that an analogous situation had led to revolt in 1831. Then they were pursued and insulted, stones were thrown at their carriages, their lives were in danger, and they were obliged to capitulate. The same spirit was aroused this time, but with the difference that meetings, where the voices of orators, a more terrible weapon than stones, instead of striking at their persons, aimed at the very principle of their political existence, took the place of uproar and violence.

The Lords are at once an hereditary assembly and a body of great landed proprietors, who

share the soil of England between them. Does not the very formula "hereditary assembly" imply a primary abuse? The son of a great legislator is not necessarily a great legislator, any more than the son of an orator is an orator, or the child of any other great man is an inheritor of his genius. Even in ordinary learned professions, the transmission of peculiar talent is rarely hereditary. A vocation is seldom transmissible, and however clever a politician may be, however mighty a sovereign, they cannot cast the brain of their offspring into the same mould. Heredity is, therefore, a source of weakness; for it opens the doors of an assembly that should be the temple of wisdom, justice and right, where laws become vital forces, to mediocrity and to incapacity.

The agrarian question arising from the monopoly of the land tenure leads to still greater evils than heredity. The remedy for pauperism, and for most of the social problems, is in the hands of the Lords, just as revolution, that weapon of the people, is in the hands

of the masses. And it may be predicted with certainty that if a revolution ever takes place in England, it will not be a political one. Public opinion, and the means of agitation possessed by the people, are powerful enough to overthrow a ministry, or to secure a dissolution of the House of Commons. But the imminent revolution, and one that would look like legitimate vengeance, is agrarian. Who cannot perceive the danger incurred by society at large from an assembly of legislators who have the right to reject every law of reform concerning property? But it would take a volume to make you understand how important this right of rejecting laws becomes in the hands of the Lords. The existence and not only the prerogatives of the English aristocracy rest on the possession of land, and on the seigneurial authority it gives over all who are supported by the land. Every agrarian law is therefore a menace to them, perhaps even a sentence of death; and yet it is from them that the sanction of such a law is expected!

The opposition of the Lords to the Franchise Bill was only logical; for the vote, by giving a share of power to the lower classes, puts into their hands legal weapons for the destruction of the privileges of the aristocracy. The Lords —and how could anything else be expected?— represent only their own interests, in entire opposition to those of the people. All progress is for them a terror and a danger; they therefore constantly oppose it, and have kept back the march of progress in the sense of reforms for at least a hundred years.

Most of the members of the House of Peers know nothing of public affairs, and only come down to the House when it is a question of rejecting, in a body, some law that has been proposed. The condition of Ireland is largely due to the Lords. In 1843 and 1854 the Lords opposed all the agrarian laws brought forward in favour of that country, and they have pursued the same policy ever since, mercilessly rejecting all that injured their personal interest, and, worse still, affected their prejudices and

their intolerance. Nothing is ever got from them but capitulation; never one of those grand Acts that do honour to an assembly that make a body illustrious, and spare a nation the shocks which endanger not only its physical, but its moral existence. Formerly when a law passed the House of Commons, the question used to be, "What will the Lords do?" Now, it is only asked, "What shall we do with the Lords?" Has this ancient, noble, and powerful English aristocracy exhausted all its powers of resistance? Will it put itself in opposition to the force of democratic feeling, or will it show true greatness, as the nobles did in the early days of the French Revolution, or as our Russian aristocracy did at the time of the emancipation of the serfs? Will it be wise and disinterested enough to accept progress rather than wait and have the concession wrung from it?

The House of Lords has time for reflection; for the palace where it sits will not fall down at the sound of the popular trumpets so

easily as the walls of Jericho fell. Titles exercise in England a fascination quite unknown elsewhere. At great festivals the poorest people assemble in crowds to watch all the wealth and luxury pass by, and many a foreigner, like myself, who has been tempted to speak to some ragged individual, has received the proud reply, "These are our Lords."

This weakness for a title is such that the politics of a vacillating enemy can readily be settled by the promise of a peerage. Three hundred and two baronetcies have been created since 1830, and two hundred and twenty-five were given to Liberals as a reward for their change of party. In 1831 the agitation against the House of Lords had decreed its downfall. The noble peers were not the first nor will they be the last who preferred to submit rather than resign. This time the conflict of public opinion against the Lords has assumed a form, become a society, and taken a threatening name—that of the "National League for the Abolition of the Hereditary House." At the head of this

league are some determined men, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Labouchère, Burt, and many others; but so long as the Government has at its head men like Hartington, Harcourt, Granville, and Derby, the Peers may continue to look down upon the people from the heights of their haughty security. "Where we are," they say, "we see the masses as if from a balloon, and they look very small;"—a figure of speech that the people have been quick to use in a contrary sense, for they assert that seen from below the balloon looks smaller still.

If the days of the House of Lords are not yet numbered, its years most decidedly are. It is an ancient edifice that rests only upon the shifting sands of privilege and of class interests and as slight storms have already made it shake and tremble, a tempest will completely overthrow it.

When a member of the House of Commons passes to the Upper House, whether from his new surroundings, or from the extreme honour, or from the indifference of a satisfied ambition,

he inevitably loses any talent he has previously possessed. Thus Mr. Robert Lowe, a weighty orator in the Commons, became Lord Sherbrooke, and has for ever after held his peace in the House of Lords.

The presidency belongs by right to the Lord Chancellor, but he has not the power of the Speaker of the House of Commons; he is only an ornamental decoration. Seated on the woolsack, dressed up like a figure in a puppet-show, with a long, grotesque wig, he is the only minister who must necessarily be a member of the Upper House. Unless they are peers, the other Ministers can only enter it as visitors. Is it not strange that even the President of the Council, even a Minister of Agriculture, interested in an agrarian question may not come and make the voice of the Government heard outside the assembly to which they belong?

I will mention a few of the most interesting among the Lords.

The Duke of Argyll, a Scotchman, fills his exalted position in the Upper House, in society,

and in the world of literature, brilliantly. He does not speak in the House, he preaches, and gives a strong Scottish tone to all his discourses. But in literature the fighting-cock element in him asserts itself; he is always ready for combat, and rushes to the attack at the slightest provocation. He makes war on other people's works, but does not produce many himself. He is a Presbyterian, and may even be called a theologian. He has a cultivated, active, inquiring mind, with great strength of character, but with a polemical disposition that he sedulously cultivates. Lord Granville and he are at the head of the Liberal party of the Upper House. The duke is also the father-in-law of Princess Louise.

The Duke of Richmond is a handsome man, sixty-one years of age, simple and unaffected, without pride, with a bright, genial face and pleasant manners, very frank and distinguished, a *grand seigneur*, but very obstinate in his opinions.

Those who meet him in the country might

easily be misled by appearances to take him for some good honest farmer; but he is one of the grandest persons of the British aristocracy, and the friend and adviser of the Queen. He possesses a baronetcy, an earldom, two duchies, the title of Hereditary Constable of the Castle of Inverness, &c., &c. A man of high principle and impartial in his judgment, he was chosen as leader to the Conservatives, but was found too prudent. He is, in fact, more moderate and less hasty than Lord Salisbury.

Lord Cairns, formerly Lord Chancellor, who has just died, was a very religious man, like his successor.

The Marquis of Ripon has just come back from India and resumed his place in the House of Lords. With Lord Northbrook and Lord Lytton, he makes the third ex-Viceroy now sitting there.

Lord Shaftesbury's long life has been passed in endeavouring to ameliorate the condition of the working classes. He is a staunch defender of the Church. He has declared in the

House that he might be called "a man who has never been influenced by party motives."

The Duke of Norfolk, a descendant of a royal line, and Hereditary Earl Marshal, is chiefly remarkable for his open desertion of the Liberal party on account of the agricultural laws proposed by Mr. Gladstone.

Lord Hampden, formerly Sir Henry Brand, and for many years Speaker of the House of Commons, is a model of honour and impartiality; no one was ever better fitted to exercise the authority that rightly belongs to a great character and a great position. He had no enemies, although he was the terror of unruly members. When last year he resigned and was made a Peer, the House voted him as a recognition of his long services a pension of 4000*l.* a year.

Among the extraordinary Peers is Lord Tennyson, the Poet Laureate.

But I must stop, although there are many interesting figures among these noble lords. We shall meet them elsewhere, in society and

amid their sports; so I will conclude this letter with the Duke of Westminster. He is the possessor of such a fortune that a large family could live for a year on his income for a day.

TENTH LETTER.

PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS.

Lord Salisbury is one of the most interesting and striking figures in the present political world, and his struggle against all the tendencies of the time inspires a certain curiosity mingled with respect. He has, in the highest sense of the term, a sort of Don Quixote-ism that makes this great Conservative leader seem like a giant of olden times, valiant and bold. He is constantly striving against democracy, although he knows perfectly well that it must be victorious in the end, and so he appears to be a warrior fighting for honour only. Sarcastic, bitter, and haughty, never compromising the convictions which exclude him from the

chance of power, he is well fitted to be at the head of a party of resistance. But how he must suffer at having such a limited sphere of action, at being only the head of a coterie when his stature is that of the chief of a counter revolution! If he had not to struggle against Radicalism, the vulture of this modern Prometheus; if monarchy, which is his faith, were never in danger, he might make a wise and benevolent Minister of a despotic Government. His great integrity, his contempt for all compromise, all accommodation, gives him a sort of frankness that is almost cynical. He sees the danger and denies it; he conceives the remedy and rejects it, and he would bring everything into court, rather than submit to a solution imposed by events. The Lords applaud his severely just criticisms, his attacks upon the Ministry, whose errors he pitilessly exposes; but if he were in power he would certainly do worse than they have done. He carries on the tradition of resistance and rivalry that made Wellington struggle against

Grey, Peel against Russell, Disraeli against Gladstone. There is not a Conservative more conservative than he. An enemy to all the tendencies of modern society—always throwing himself into the breach, he is the champion of existing institutions, not because he thinks then just or reasonable, but simply because they exist; this is his favourite argument. Possessing an analytical and profound mind, and a style formed by great literary research, he forms his sentences finely; but he is so true, so sincere, that he constantly escapes from these artificial forms, and yielding to the impulse of his nature, pours forth his invective and his sarcasm, unpolished and unmitigated.

Having a horror of the French Revolution, and insisting that England is great because she has resisted revolutionary ideas, he refuses to see that what has saved his country from modern calamities, is not the obstinacy behind which he entrenches himself, but the timely concessions made by his predecessors.

Out of Parliament, Lord Salisbury is a

perfect man of the world, and his political *salon* is eagerly frequented. He receives much, but always a set chosen by himself and belonging to the highest society. He has two country houses, one near Dieppe and the other at Hatfield, where, like the Prince of Wales, he gives garden parties.

Among the Liberal leaders of the Upper House is Lord Granville, whom I have already mentioned to you among the Ministers. In the House of Commons Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Randolph Churchill are the Conservative leaders; among those of the Liberals are several members of the present Ministry and the great orator John Bright, who, without being an acknowledged leader, must certainly be mentioned. Sir Stafford Northcote, the chief of the Conservative party in the House of Commons, is a colourless politician, with a great knowledge of business and of parliamentary formalities, who commands the respect of his colleagues and the esteem of his opponents, but excites the enthusiasm of neither. A conscien-

tious man, he fulfils his duties towards his party, and is happy when they accord with his duties as a citizen. He has some qualities as a statesman, but he is not an orator. He cannot, like Lord Salisbury, find opportunities for eloquence in the chances of debate.

No one understands the value of compromise better than Sir Stafford Northcote. He is not a great man, but he is a gentleman, kindly, sensible, and of sound judgment. A high sense of honour rules all his actions, and his word is sacred. In spite of a few errors, his political career is distinguished and honourable.

Lord Randolph Churchill belongs to the celebrated Marlborough family. At first sight there is nothing striking about him, but so soon as he speaks, his energy is displayed in his countenance and in all his movements.

Although he is only thirty-five years of age, Lord Randolph Churchill seems to have all the knowledge that can be lent by audacity.

I like to see him standing like a classic hero,

provoking, threatening, and insulting the august assembly of the Commons. He has broad views, and is ambitious. If he be not beaten early in the fight, he has a great future before him. It is only his delicate health that can banish him from the arena of politics. A passionate, but not a vulgar speaker, he has, when he condescends to use it, great ability. He is a gay and pleasant companion, an excellent friend, a faithful brother, and much liked in his own circle. His wife is a pretty American.

The adversaries of Lord Randolph Churchill have refused to regard him as a serious politician, and have even called him an obstructionist, but in the eyes of the governing party opposition readily becomes obstruction. He is also accused of objecting to everything, of being factious; but if he sometimes irritates from the strength of his language, his talent, his skill as a speaker, his observation, and his advice, command attention. He is not exclusive, and has often supported his opponents, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Labouchère, and even Mr.

Parnell. Indeed he is well acquainted with the affairs of Ireland. He has just brought forward a question upon the reform of the staff in ministerial establishments; asserting that the Foreign Office is a nest of idlers, the War Office a refuge for fools, the Admiralty a herd of incapables, and the *employés* in general an army of impotent men all too well paid. Will he remember this when he is a Minister? as, in spite of his opposition to Lord Salisbury, he certainly will be in the first Conservative Cabinet.

John Bright is not the leader of a clique, but one of the greatest leaders of public opinion. The member for Birmingham, the Lancashire Quaker, the great manufacturer, now seventy-three years of age, is one of the greatest figures in the political world. No man has ever been more calumniated, but neither has any man ever been more praised, more beloved. He has been at once the scapegoat and the idol of his countrymen. His leonine head, his noble and imposing appearance, attract immediate atten-

tion, his movements are quick and decisive, his glance is keen and prompt. He is acknowledged even by his enemies to be a politician of the first rank, and the House fills at once if he is going to speak. He begins hesitatingly, and in a conversational tone, but gradually becomes animated, as if inspired by the sound of his own voice. A practical man, he makes others see what is so clear to himself; a clever and eloquent orator, his diction is very correct, though he does not make phrases, and his resonant voice, his grand manner, his choice of fitting words, his tact in graduating the effect, his convincing logic, his sagacity, his good sense, his humour, his presence of mind, his heartiness, his outbursts of contempt and indignation, all contribute to make an exceptional man of him, who rules other men by virtue of his own unequalled merit. He is always master of himself, does not borrow trite quotations from Latin authors, but if he makes one at all, takes it from English literature which he has entirely mastered. His speeches have a vague flavour

of Puritanism; sometimes he allows himself to hide his moderation under apparent violence, but the precision of his thought brings him back to his own simple expressions. Gifted with extreme penetration and fertile in resources, if he had created a Cabinet it would have been a hard-working Cabinet, and the Radical tendencies that are imputed to him would have been tempered by the marvellous judgment that always enables him to find the key to a situation, the solution of a difficulty. As a member of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet he was somewhat thrown into the shade, and was an ornament to the Ministry, rather than the life and soul of it. He was offered a seat in the Cabinet because he is a power in the country, and commands an immense number of votes; many other posts have been offered him, but he has no love of power, and there can be no greater error than to look upon him as a demagogue, as some people do, and to assert that he sympathizes with revolutionists. His name is connected with the abolition of the Corn Laws and

Church Rates, and with the Hindoo policy. He averted war with America by getting the Alabama question settled by arbitration, and he is an advocate for the Channel tunnel.

ELEVENTH LETTER.

ENGLISH POLITICS.

No. 1.—Home Politics.

The English have an invincible belief in their national supremacy, a blind faith in the superiority of their Constitution. They like to make a parade of their power abroad and their liberty at home. No doubt, England as a nation, benefiting by her insular position, free from troublesome neighbours,—does escape the constantly arising dangers that threaten Continental countries at every moment; but has she not to fear certain social disturbances within her boundaries which may prove the more serious because th ey have not the natural outlet of frontiers?

England has preserved her aristocratic omnipotence, while most European countries have been gradually transformed by democracy; but, will not the natural expansion of things soon try England by a force that seems definitively incompressible? Has the old edifice of the Constitution a sufficiently firm basis in the aristocracy to resist the pressure of the mob? This is a grave question which I cannot undertake to answer.

In England the cracks of the Constitution have been plastered over by a few Liberal laws; but, from certain signs, and since the people prove themselves to be capable of disputing, and yet respecting the laws, it is evident that they will one day throw off the tyranny imposed on public opinion by the old English formula, "an established thing is a sacred thing."

The free English nation has more than once proved its political strength by its spirit of sacrifice and obedience. Without this its selfishness would have destroyed liberty.

The English people reason, they listen to the

teachers of progress, they are educating themselves slowly and surely, and the qualities they are acquiring, added to those they already possess, may one day tell with a decisive weight in the downfall of worn-out institutions. What makes the strength and the constitutional safety of England is, that the will of the nation is more powerful than that of parties, and when this will, now supported only by the middle class, by merchants and manufacturers, is supported by the entire mass of the people,—the aristocracy, which has hitherto been a bulwark against revolution, will learn the truth that a nation belongs to itself, and not to a Sovereign, or to a privileged class.

When I read the speeches of politicians delivered in obscure villages, it is evident to me that the established authority is in that transition state which makes it necessary to consider and conciliate the people, because they are becoming formidable to it. Men of note have already uttered the word—Republic, and the English, the most law-abiding people

in the world, are exactly fitted to realize the model of that form of government, whose only ideal superior is the ideal of the law.

The aristocracy, the so-called bulwark of the Constitution, but in truth the fortress of its own interests only, completely nullifies that liberty of which the English people are so proud, rendering it a disguised form of serfdom? The aristocracy remains at the head of all the great State manifestations, it accepts or rejects laws in the House of Lords, and two-thirds of the soil, as well as all titles and dignities worth having, belong to it.

The people, it is true, have many liberties on paper, but they are fictitious, and will never be true and substantial so long as they depend upon the aristocracy. Thus, for example, a workman may offer himself as a member of Parliament, but his want of money practically places an insuperable barrier in the way of his ambition, for votes are bought, in spite of the ballot, and every election costs a little fortune.

Nothing is more easy than to evade the

Corrupt Practices Bill; electoral corruption can be practised in a hundred ways, and under skilfully disguised forms.

Another insurmountable obstacle to poor candidates, and one that effectually excludes a working-man from the House,—is the non-payment of members of Parliament.

The sale of commissions has been stopped, and the paid soldiers who compose the voluntarily recruited army of Great Britain, may henceforth aspire to the honours of high command. There again, however, facts bar the road to fortuneless men: commissions are given to the younger sons of good families, for those persons must be placed either in the Army, the Navy, the Civil Service, or the Church, natural resources for all aristocrats without fortune, whatever may be their aptitude or capacity. The ordinary soldier, therefore, can only get on with great difficulty, even if he ever gets on at all. England is a country of sinecures, governed by the same class to-day who governed it in the middle ages; it is in the hands of an

oligarchy; for the upper circle of the aristocracy rules the rulers.

This concentration of power has led to an agrarian situation that must be redressed, and is the most formidable difficulty with which the Government is confronted. The condition of English labourers is heartrending, and excites the deepest pity.

Towards the end of the last century there were 250,000 farmers owning portions of land; but in 1793 the English aristocracy, terrified at the possible contagion of the revolutionary movement in France, and fearing the power of these small rural proprietors, gradually bought up all their land, and concentrated the soil in its own hands. Having thus deprived the people of their real means of independence, the lords made up for this monopoly by apparent concessions and pretended privileges. In 1832 there were only 32,000 land-owners, and now 250 great noblemen possess the half of England and three-quarters of Scotland. Land is the basis of power, and therefore of liberty; it is the

strength of the proprietor, but it means dependence to the tenant. Can a dependant ever have any other opinion than that of his lord? When the soil is owned instead of being rented, the infinite subdivision of land becomes one of the solutions of pauperism, as we are taught by the laws of Lycurgus, by the famous agrarian laws of the Gracchi, and by the example of the United States, Switzerland, and France. Here, then, is an important and serious problem, constantly brought forward by the Liberal Ministers, and as constantly contested, adjourned, distorted, and rejected, by the Peers, whose very existence is threatened by land reform. The system by which one man is enriched at the expense of thousands of miserable toilers is a very dangerous element in the present internal condition of Great Britain. After this question necessarily comes that of pauperism, a malady which, together with drunkenness, is preying upon England.

Although the amount of personal and voluntary charity is incalculable, and greatly lightens

the burdens of the Government and the municipalities, in spite of the thousands of pounds given to hospitals, and to all institutions for the prevention and relief of destitution, pauperism is far from diminishing. The remedy is not to be found in charity, however lavish it may be—it can only be effected by constitutional reforms; and those, the English, like other European Governments, do not study. They only gaze with indifference or incapacity on the ever-spreading leprosy of destitution. Most of them deny the danger in its social aspect; it is nevertheless one with which they will have to reckon before long.

As for drunkenness, the laws enacted against that public vice are powerless, and the reason is plain enough: the legislators have not limited the constantly increasing number of public-houses. More than one parliamentary social reformer has proposed remedies for this malady, which is both epidemic and contagious, but none have been listened to. The temperance societies have been more fortunate, and

have succeeded, to a certain extent, where the imperfect laws had failed.

I should have to touch on a great many other points if I were to indicate all the reforms necessary in the magistrature, in the administration of justice, in the codification of practical laws to replace the voluminous archives of precedents and customs, all so much waste paper, that fill the libraries of the Inns of Court. Municipal organization would have to be entirely reconstituted. The English navy can no longer rank as the first in the world, and the army is everywhere acknowledged to be inadequate.

The Radical party, of which I have spoken, gains recruits from day to day, and must in the end force its programme upon the serious attention of the governing powers. The recent advance in electoral reform opens such a vast field to democracy in the future, that I must leave it and its results to the writers of the future.

As I have to limit myself to the space of a letter, I will close my brief remarks on the home

politics of England by the burning question of free trade and taxation. Free trade has made England the greatest market in the world, and to that the United Kingdom owes the public wealth acquired during the last forty years. The products of all countries pass through England, and in being negotiated there, leave a part of their value behind them; thus has colossal wealth been accumulated.

Some idea may be formed of this bewildering commercial activity by the gigantic transactions of the Clearing-House, the average of which was every week of the year 1871, 92,061,865*l.*; and the public revenue was increasing every day, although the duties were being continually lessened. The export trade was something marvellous, and from the most distant corners of the world all who wished to effect great loans and to start great companies came to this golden market. The merchant navy was as great as that of all other countries put together, and the Colonies shared the ever-increasing prosperity.

A curious feature in this state of things is that the State had nothing to do with it, except in having voted free trade and approved of the great Cobden. The vast result was, on the contrary, entirely due to the absence of State interference in commerce and manufactures; the State was neither the constructor nor administrator of railways, nor the organizer of maritime companies—it had nothing to do with the execution of public works or with traffic; everything was originated and carried out by private enterprise.

But a check came. The stock markets are now encumbered, the incessant production finds fewer outlets, and ever-increasing competition makes profits infinitesimally small; so that with all her wealth England is threatened with a dangerous commercial crisis. In this state of things two parties have arisen: the party of fair trade, which demands protective duties to a certain extent; and the party of free trade, which proposes the suppression of all the existing customs dues, and wishes to make the

whole of England a free port. The aim of an intelligent policy should be to open every outlet, to remove all obstacles, and to raise taxes only from fortunes already acquired and results already obtained. The customs forms an impediment to many branches of commerce, and to freedom of commerce in general ; and the experience of these years of trial has proved that it might be abolished. Each time that the duty has been removed from an article of commerce, the profits upon it have increased,and it is certain that the ideal of trade is the abolition of all fiscal restrictions. What a glorious spectacle if all the custom-houses of Europe were to disappear simultaneously! The principal resources of the revenue are the income tax and the Queen's taxes; the other taxes go into the municipal coffers. The English exchequer is supplied by taxation; it has no recourse to expedients or to loans. The income tax, which was fivepence in the pound, has been raised this year to sixpence, in order to supply the deficit caused by the Egyptian expedi-

tion.[1] In very urgent cases the Treasury issues bonds at short date; this is a kind of temporary loan. The income tax, although vexatious in its form, is much fairer than the taxes that press upon labour and production. The income tax costs less to collect than indirect taxes, for the latter require a complicated mechanism which absorbs part of the products; while the income tax, collected in a very simple manner, goes directly into the coffers of the State without any appreciable diminution.

Indirect taxation reminds me of the old toll-bar gates, where the amount received exactly represented the salaries of the men who kept them. In England the partial suppression of indirect taxation has especially benefited the upper and the middle classes. What remains of this tax especially falls upon the poor man's articles of ordinary consumption: beer, tea, tobacco, &c. Those articles are still heavily taxed, while

[1] An increase to eightpence forms an item in Mr. Childers' recent Budget.

objects of luxury have been freed. Limited purses buy in small quantities, and thus pay more dearly than if they could lay in large supplies or vary the articles of consumption; so it may be said that direct taxes are paid by the rich, and indirect taxes by the poor.

I will not speak of the rural districts which are most unfairly burdened; this comes into the agrarian question, which must inevitably be the "delenda est Carthago" of the home policy of England, and has a distinguished champion in the person of Sir Stafford Northcote.

II.—Foreign Policy.

From the moment that England alone no longer supplies the markets of the world, when the improvement of foreign ports deprives her of her formerly unique position, when her imports increase as fast as her exports diminish, when her great rival, America, competes with her everywhere abroad, and even at home, the commercial policy of England—a vital

policy that necessarily overrides every other consideration—must inevitably be a colonial policy. The geographical position of the United Kingdom, standing like a sentinel in the ocean, on the road to all the great distant continents, its natural defences which isolate it from the schemes and ambitions of Europe, its enormous internal development, its multitude of ports in the four seas, the extent of its navy, the nautical aptitude of its people,—all have given England an exceptionally advantageous position with regard to a colonial policy.

England has only one natural enemy, whose insidious policy is always baffling her own—that enemy is Russia. England is only interested in other nations in proportion to their influence in Eastern affairs, with which she is always occupied. Hitherto her colonies had given her little trouble; but now—and here I recognize the working of Providence—Mr. Gladstone's advent to power has struck a vigorous blow at the roots of the colonial tree.

At the very moment that the colonies of

England are causing so much anxiety, how is it that Europe is seized with the idea of cutting up the globe, and of making a number of little colonies? The result is very curious, as it forces the statesman who would, if he could, reduce England to her original limits, to require her to muster all her forces, in order to defend what he would like her to relinquish. At this moment Mr. Gladstone has no further opportunity for the application of his anti-colonial theories. He has to pursue a policy of necessity, and alternately to watch, suspect, or coax Germany, who is now directly menacing the far-off English possessions. Besides the Germanic annexations, side by side with the English, the good understanding between the Germans and Boers is a danger to the Cape and Natal. The warriors who have beaten the English three times, in the defile of Laing's Nek, remind us of those formidable Swiss whom the Dukes of Burgundy were never able to conquer.

The colonies, threatened on all sides, harass

the Foreign Office with imperious demands for protection, and the Foreign Office replies by asking them for soldiers to assist in Egypt or India!

The vicinity of the Germans has irritated Australia, and an inclination for independence, for self-protection, is gradually increasing among the people, who feel themselves to be grown up, and want to escape from the leading-strings of the mother-country. Just as it has happened in America, the Australian colonies, peopled with the sons of England, forget imperial patriotism, and become colonial patriots, limiting the sentiment to their new country. Mr. Gladstone is much embarrassed by the incapacity of Lord Derby. The least-governed colonists weigh the advantages of their attachment to the empire with those of secession, and as they are already emancipated in heart, they may soon emancipate themselves in fact. Australia has even ventured to levy protective duties on certain English products, in order to protect her local industry.

The United States much desire that Canada should enter the Union. A powerful Irish colony is trying to detach it from England, and the country is beginning to calculate its chances of independence. The Marquis of Lorne, when he was Viceroy, asserted that the opposition to the incorporation of Canada with the neighbouring States was due only to the influence of French Canadians.

India, with its 200,000,000 of British subjects, is a cause of so much well-founded anxiety to English politicians, that I must give it a special place.

The muttered threat, heard throughout India, of a rebellion, or a Russian invasion, Wolseley's unfortunate expedition to the Soudan, the turbulence in Ireland, the inevitable and closely impending agrarian questions, have brought Great Britain to the verge of a dangerous political crisis, as well as a dangerous commercial crisis. Solicitude for home affairs has at this moment to give place to imperial cares. Every sore is now smarting, the whole country ad-

mits the disorganization of the army, and the insufficiency of the navy; the sense of helplessness and humiliation exasperates it; and it accuses its favourite Minister of failing to protect its Colonial Empire.

During the five years that Mr. Gladstone has been in power, his adversaries accuse him of having alienated Europe, and weakened all the possessions of the Empire.

He began, they say, by irritating Austria. In a short time he estranged France, Denmark, Turkey, and India, where his hesitation left millions of people to die of famine. I now give the views of Mr. Gladstone's enemies, because, by quoting their complaints, I can best make you understand the double side of English political questions. Every affirmation of Lord Beaconsfield implies a negation of Mr. Gladstone, and *vice versâ*.

At the Conference at Berlin, in June, 1880, to settle the Grecian Frontier, the bad temper of Prince Bismarck, who could not forgive Mr. Gladstone for having ousted his rival, was used

by the Tories as a proof of the diplomatic weakness of the chief of the Liberal party; while it was only, in reality, a confirmation of his victory over themselves. One of the crimes of which Mr. Gladstone is accused, is his goodwill to Greece. He is reproached with having encouraged the Government of Athens to raise a loan, and to create an army, and with having afterwards prevented Greece from making use of the means that he himself had advised. It is forgotten that France, influenced by Turkey, Germany, and Austria, had meanwhile withdrawn her moral support from Greece, and that England alone could not sustain that country. She did so long enough to injure her relations with those three Powers.

After his fall from power, Lord Beaconsfield condemned every action of his triumphant adversary with virulence, poured forth in public at every opportunity.

I must admit that Mr. Gladstone's Egyptian policy is inconsistent and contradictory. In his electoral speeches he had blamed the ac-

quisition of Cyprus, and that of the Transvaal, and repeatedly said, "My Government is a Government of peace." And he made this precise declaration: "The Gladstone Cabinet will not make war. Attention should not be diverted from public affairs by foreign policy." With what a storm of sarcasm he was received in the House the day after the bombardment of Alexandria—a bombardment all the more unjustifiable as a conference was at that moment going on at Constantinople! I must, in justice, say, however, that in all this Egyptian affair Mr. Gladstone's hand was forced by the "Princes of Finance." The Tories assert that Mr. Gladstone moves as the policy of Lord Beaconsfield leads him; but how could it be otherwise, in a fixed position, with the same surroundings, and dealing with the same interests? For instance, after Mr. Gladstone had in his speeches condemned the acquisition of Cyprus, was he wrong in making the best use of it? After he had declared to the Sultan that he would

oppose all interference by him in Egypt, he was forced by circumstances to return to Lord Beaconsfield's policy, and to declare that Turkish intervention would be the wisest measure. Tossed about in a position imposed upon him, but not created by him, he alternately alienates the Sultan, and asks for his good offices; then threatens him, and prevents his ships being sent to Egypt at the time of the bombardment; and later still, when the Mahdi appears to be triumphant, he turns to this same Sultan, and asks him to send an Ottoman force to Egypt to crush the rebel. All these contradictory proceedings were imposed upon him by events.

It may be asserted that England has never approved of the war in the Soudan. When Mr. Goschen, representing the English bondholders, went about the country preaching this crusade, he was asked, "Are we going to be so foolish as to fight and make enormous sacrifices of men and money, in order that the Egyptians may be spoiled for the benefit of a few bondholders?"

The Soudanese question has served as a fruitful theme for the enemies of Mr. Gladstone; his delays and his half-measures have given the Mahdi some very easy victories. A war that is thought useless is always feebly organized, and the English only went on with this war in the Soudan because it seemed necessary to maintain the prestige of the English in the eyes of the Mussulman population of India. England is but seeking a pretext to retire, and she will perhaps find it in the necessity for defending her Indian Mussulmans against Russia. The Mahdi, intoxicated with his success, declares he will take Egypt from the English, but those who consider the position coolly, count upon the perfidy and treachery natural to the Soudanese to relieve them of the Mahdi.

In this affair of the Soudan a curious part is being played by Italy, and, in spite of their well-known diplomatic skill, the Italians seem in great danger of gaining nothing but suspicion and embarrassment at Massowah. No doubt the English were flattered to see them coming to

their assistance; but sudden changes of opinion are very frequent and very easy in England! The Cabinet of Rome, deceived by the selfish policy perfidious Albion is forced to pursue, will certainly discover before long that much disappointment awaits it in the Soudan.

To whatever side Mr. Gladstone turns, or however he may act, he is entangled in the meshes of Lord Beaconsfield's policy, and can only find an issue to his present difficulties in some utter contradiction of his own opinions. When, with practical wisdom, he accepts facts thrust upon him by previous facts, he is accused of contradicting himself; and when he resists circumstances that he has not brought about, it is asserted that his only object is to destroy all his rival had created. For Mr. Gladstone the dilemma is this: he must either, against his own inclination, exact considerable sacrifices from England, and reconstitute her Colonial Empire, or he must lose this Colonial Empire that he thinks fatal to her, and thereby incur the malediction of the country.

But in asking the good offices of Germany, is not Mr. Gladstone adding another danger to those that already menace him? Whatever he may do, the policy of a Liberal Cabinet will never please the Iron Chancellor so well as the policy of a Tory Cabinet, and the resigned submission of Mr. Gladstone will never make Bismarck forget the ready complaisance of Lord Beaconsfield.

A rupture between England and Germany is inevitable. Prince Bismarck pursues his obvious intention of absorbing Holland in Germany: this with one stroke would give him the Dutch colonies, and place a formidable rival to England at the very doors of India and Australia. This danger England has brought upon herself, and it is probably now too late to escape it. If she had chosen to do so, she could have prevented Sadowa and Sedan, and united Germany would not now exist. Austria asked nothing better than to join with England and prevent the Schleswig campaign; but she could not venture to act alone. The Queen opposed

the Austrian alliance, fearing to have to draw the sword against her good friends the Germans.

The foresight of England seems to be restricted to special subjects, and Lord Palmerston, the author of the hereditary policy of England, did not foresee, when he enfeebled the Netherlands by making the kingdom of Belgium, what burdens he was leaving to his successors by the treaties of 1831 and 1839. He was aiming at France, whom he called the "natural enemy" of England, and was concentrating all his efforts on the frustration of French policy. It was not until afterwards that he came back to her and held out his hand, when he perceived that she might be a useful friend, and that the danger was in Prussia.

If Mr. Gladstone is at the present time following the early policy of Lord Palmerston, he will soon find out what it costs him. Acts of deference to Prince Bismarck always run the risk of being looked upon by France as acts of hostility towards herself.

III.—The Indian Question.

"Europe will either be Republican or Russian," said Napoleon, and both alternatives seem to be realizing themselves; for Europe is gradually becoming Republican, while the power of Russia increases from day to day. If she succeeds in taking India and Constantinople, she will hold the supremacy of the world. It is said that all the different races composing the Russian Empire are without cohesion, and therefore prepare the way for its dismemberment; but this is not so. The nations to whom they offer themselves as liberators, and whom they carry with them on their onward march, the very form of their aristocracy, their Asiatic instincts, bring them nearer to those whom Western people call barbarians.

In the East, Russia claims to have a sacred mission; and it is well known with what religious fervour she follows the line of conduct traced out by Peter the Great, whose will is to the

Russians, as Murray says, "the charter of Russian Imperialism." Until now Gladstone always understood the necessity of friendly relations between England and Russia, and when he married the Duke of Edinburgh to the daughter of the Czar, he accomplished an action of great political importance. But in our day royal unions have only a platonic influence, if they are not supplemented by friendship between nations. Mr. Gladstone proved what his opinion was by signing the humiliating treaty of London in 1871, which seemed to establish the agreement between England and Russia on a definitive footing.

Following out the system which made his policy a direct contradiction of that of Lord Beaconsfield, when the war in the East began, Mr. Gladstone, remaining faithful to Russia, preached a crusade in its favour, while Lord Beaconsfield used every means suggested by his enmity to provoke an anti-Russian agitation in the United Kingdom, and skilfully stopped the Russians at the gates of Con-

stantinople. At that moment the war in Afghanistan broke out, and Lord Beaconsfield inflamed it, hoping that the outbreak would spread as far as the Russian possessions, and that the whole of India would rise against the "Colossus of clay."

So soon as Mr. Gladstone came into power again, he caused the evacuation of Candahar —an unpardonable mistake, by which the 19,500,000*l.* the war had cost was entirely thrown away. But India continued to be disturbed; its people, who are apparently so calm, do not, when seized by the fever of revolt, recover quickly from the excitement. The Afghans, especially, are a nation of warriors; like all mountaineers, every man knows how to handle a gun, and delights in using it. In time of war, devotion to their country, or love of independence will produce innumerable soldiers everywhere for the defence of their narrow frontier passes. But these small bodies of troops are without organization, and although they

can defend their defiles, they disperse so soon as they find themselves exposed to European armies. You remember, no doubt, what was the question of the moment when General Komaroff entered Afghanistan. An Anglo-Russian Commission was charged with the delimitation of the frontier, under the direction of Sir Peter Lumsden, on the English side, and the dilatory behaviour of this Commission had somewhat injured the prestige of Great Britain; but whose fault was that?

The time of this definition of the frontier was identical with the taking of Khartoum by the Mahdi; and if Russia had not been withheld by respect for the misfortunes of her friend and ally, Mr. Gladstone, she might have profited by the defeat of England, and could have entered Afghanistan without difficulty. Instead of letting their vanguards encamp at Penj-deh, and keeping them back at the river Murgab, they could have cleared the pass of the Sobat, which is the key of Herat, as Herat is the key of India. The road is the same as that which has

been followed from times immemorial by the hordes of the north who have overrun Hindustan. They took Tashkend in 1864, Bokhara in 1870, Khiva in 1873, Khokand in 1876, then Merv and Sarakhs, and they will take Herat in the same manner.

When they march towards India, they march with certainty, and the people offer less and less resistance as they approach. Everywhere they make roads, construct railways, put up telegraph lines, and soon they will be able to transport a hundred thousand men to Merv in six days. Russia occupies the Khanate of Khiva and has incorporated it. Khiva and Merv are united, and together form a government that may become the head-quarters of many future conquests. The Khan is a descendant of the famous Tamerlane, and acknowledges himself a tributary of the Czar, who to all his other titles will soon add that of Emperor of Central Asia. The day is perhaps not far distant when the coronation of the Russian Emperor will take place at Samarkand in the presence of

all the khans and emirs who are under the Russian protectorate. Samarkand is at the very gates of Cashmere and Lahore, and there are only the mountains of Bolor to cross to get into India.

In Afghanistan the Russian party is considerable, and the agitation in their favour very active. The Usbegs at Cabul preach separation from England, and the Sumites and Turcomans are ready to play the part of liberators by coming to the help of the Afghans. The population of Herat calls for the Russians, and the complaints of certain races in India against England are turned to good account. The Emir Abdurrahman would, perhaps, not be disinclined to retaliate on the English for their recent occupation, if the Russians would help him to do so. Their troops would have an easy victory as soon as they appeared; in many places they would be regarded as deliverers rather than as enemies.

In the Khan of Khasgar, who has at his disposal 40,000 men, well armed and well trained,

England certainly has a faithful ally, a friend disposed to bar the road to the Russians; but a few thousand Chinese would be sufficient to quiet him. No doubt, if India belonged to England body and soul, and was full of grateful subjects, she could easily find sufficient resisting force in them; but instead of this, she is deeply hated, and at any moment might have to face a Nana Sahib and an insurrection as formidable as that of 1857. The silent detestation of the victims of her unforgotten spoliations is all unappeased. India includes two distinct elements—the Hindoo and the Mohammedan; and I think it is Du Vivier who says, "At the head of its *fauna* India possesses two predominant species, the elephant and the tiger." The one is "mild," like the Hindoo, and bears the yoke; the other, like the Mohammedan, is always ready to abandon itself to fits of blind fury, and has never exhausted its stores of rage. The rebellion in the Soudan, and the success of their fellow-Mohammedans, emboldens them. They detect signs of weakness in England,

and begin to follow the onward march of Russia with the greatest interest; not because they would prefer the rule of Russia to British rule, but because they would delight to see their oppressors overthrown.

Revolutionary pamphlets are read aloud in the bazaars to groups of fanatics. The rajahs detest English officials, who are firm and just, I admit, but offensive and haughty, and they feel themselves more at ease with the Russians, who allow their customs, tolerate their vices, and are more indulgent to Oriental corruption. In fact, the Russian character harmonizes better with Asiatic tastes than is possible to English formality. Their loquacity and bright imagination pleases the Hindoos better than the reserve and stiffness of the English. The proud and haughty children of the sun hate to be ruled by mere administrators, and Russian women are received at the court of the rajahs as friends, whilst English women are treated as strangers.

Russia expends immense sums of money in quietly purchasing the Asiatic chiefs. India

swarms with her emissaries, who sow disaffection among the native races; excite discontent against the English Government; stir up the pride of the Hindoos; persuade the victims of oppression to revolt in order afterwards to proffer their help; and have used the incapacity of the Viceroy to deceive the vigilance of England. Of the thousands of addresses of sympathy and regret sent to Lord Ripon on his leaving India, the greater part were drawn up by the secret agents of Russia to reassure the United Kingdom as to the loyalty of its Hindoo subjects, and to entice the Viceroy through his vanity into saying as he did say at the moment of his departure, that the country had never been more attached or tranquil. In short, the Russians sigh for the sun of India, and the height of their ambition is to see the standard of the Czar hoisted at Government House.

TWELFTH LETTER.

THE IRISH QUESTION.

Before I discuss the Irish question I wish to say a word to those who have ignorantly called it a war of races. If I could enter upon an ethnological treatise I should be able to prove that half England is of the same origin as Ireland, and the appellation "Anglo-Saxon race," which really makes England a German colony, is as erroneous as it is wrongly interpreted. The two words, "Anglo" and "Saxon," are almost a repetition of each other, for the Angles are the people who came from the Don, and became the Saxons, and the Danes of Schleswig, who afterwards invaded Norway; and later, under the name of Scandinavians,

Scotland and the east of England. In reality, these two words are only one, and Anglo-Saxon is a pleonasm, just as England—land of the Angles—is too exclusive a term; for the country is peopled by Latin, Celtic, and Scandinavian races. The Normans invaded the south of the country, but the west, from Cornwall to the extremity of the Highlands of Scotland, belongs, like Ireland, to the Celtic race. It is not, therefore, the antagonism of races that has caused the oppression of Ireland; it is rather an antagonism of caste, a war at first of interest and now of passion, excited by these injured interests. Like nearly all the internal conflicts which rend countries governed by a powerful nobility, it is a war of caste, and Ireland has its most formidable enemies in its own aristocracy.

This conflict between the aristocratic owners of the soil and the people who rent it, also threatens England nearly. The malcontents are even beginning to raise their heads in Scotland, a tranquil country hitherto guarded by only

3320 policemen, whilst Ireland requires 25,000. The desire for property is showing itself among the little farmers of Skye and Lewis, and the labourers of Tiree threaten to take possession of the land by force if their claims are not listened to. This is the beginning of a great movement, which, before long, will embrace all the north of England, where a Land League is already formed, as in Scotland and in Ireland

I can only give you the broad outline of the origin of the revolts and the oppression which have made a bleeding victim of Ireland. A great many books have been written on the subject, and I advise you to read the last, "La Question Irlandaise," by M. Hervé. Every one knows what Ireland suffered under Elizabeth, and no more unhappy nation ever struggled with greater heroism against a more cruel despotism. Until the time of Elizabeth, Ireland was a vassal only in name, and, under Henry VIII., she even possessed a National Parliament. Elizabeth, in spite of the letters

patent that her father had granted to the chiefs of the Irish Parliament, in order to reconcile them by securing their possession of the land, destroyed the tradition of this intelligent policy, Regardless of acquired rights, and of her father's promises, she parcelled out the grants of land, and gave or sold them to English colonists.

Cromwell came, and crowned the work of spoliation by having the malcontents massacred. Then he peopled the north of the island with foreigners, to whom grants of land had been made, thus sowing the seeds of the fatal discord, which has lasted to our own day, between the Catholics and the Orangemen.

The heart-rending history of the subjugation of Ireland has been one long martyrology for the unfortunate sister island, a lugubrious tale of moral and physical suffering, a perpetual death struggle, prolonged by Ireland's amazing vitality.

Whether England understands and admits it or not, she will not find a nation in the whole world who does not stigmatize these crimes in

her history, and feel the deepest sympathy for Ireland.

An apparently benevolent reaction has taken place in our day, and timidly tried to initiate an era of reparation for the wrongs of the miserable country. Unfortunately, nearly all the Bills proposed in its favour have been successively and systematically rejected by the House of Lords. Ireland has its representatives in Parliament; but the little band, always looked upon with suspicion, imprisoned, expelled, crushed by an arbitrary majority, cannot secure redress for her wrongs and the recovery of her liberties.

There are two forces whose indomitable power will, in the end, triumph over the cruelty and resistance of England; these are national feeling and religious faith. Among the few concessions made to Ireland is liberty of conscience, and Mr. Gladstone has a claim on the eternal gratitude of the Irish, for having abolished that flagrant injustice, the English Established Church. Civil equality between

Catholics and Protestants, and liberty of education, have also been granted them. Poor slaves, they have not yet got beyond these mere preliminaries of progress! Ireland is an entirely agricultural nation, living on the produce of its land, and is decimated by a bad harvest, as if by a war. Agrarian reform is a question of life and death; to it belongs the task of effacing the iniquitous work of conquest, and relieving the frightful poverty due to the despotic rule that grinds down these poor aliens in their own country. Agrarian reform will also provide a remedy for the periodical risings of the agricultural population against the landowners. A succession of bills were proposed, notably the Land Act of 1870, and that of 1881, to regulate the relations between tenants and landowners in a more equitable manner, and to put some restraint on the arbitrary exactions of the latter.

These reforms allow the tenants to keep possession, in spite of the landowners, thanks to the creation of special commissions, em-

powered to fix rents on the demand of the tenants. The value of property having been lessened 25 per cent., the landowners claim, through the Tories, an indemnity which the Whigs reject as unfair. The latter ground their refusal on the well-founded accusation that for long years the landowners have abused their rights, oppressed the people, and extorted exorbitant rents. The repulsed plaintiffs secretly put every obstacle in the way of the Land Commission.

Such concessions, yielded so grudgingly, leavened by so much bad feeling, have not, as you may readily suppose, appeased the Irish. What they demand is not the charity of a few meagre laws; it is the acknowledgment of their natural rights; and they rest the question on the grounds of the deadly conflict between legal right and traditional right. Ireland will never be governed by English ideas. Its lasting tranquillity can only be purchased by granting it a local Parliament. At the mere sound of "Home Rule" a tempest rages in the two Houses. I have talked with Mr. O'Leary, Mr. McCarthy,

and other Parnellites, and they all assure me that Ireland wants nothing but a Parliament. That granted, there would be an end to the conflict. She wants what Austria has given to Hungary, Sweden to Norway, and she would accept the supremacy of the Queen. Mr. Gladstone, and a good many Liberals, have been won over to this just cause; but the Lords will never admit it; so the struggle must go on indefinitely.

Thanks to the efforts of Grattan, Ireland possessed a National Parliament at the beginning of this century, but committed the unpardonable fault of selling it (the expression is not too severe) to the English minister, William Pitt, and it was by its own vote amalgamated with the English Parliament. This was abdicating the autonomy that had been won, and rendering fruitless the work of the great patriot Grattan—who alone had opposed Great Britain, and wrung from it this glorious concession.

Until the days of liberty return, tyranny goes

on multiplying its crimes, and is repaid by outrages of all kinds. Vanquished, patriotic Ireland uses every means to make its animosity felt, and has to be reckoned with as an enemy in every imperial crisis.

The National League is growing; the two parties of Home Rule and of Fenianism,—that is to say, on one side Law and Order in exchange for autonomy; on the other, Rehabilitation by Revolution,—are progressing with tacit unanimity. It would be childish to assert that these forces can be destroyed; in spite of the violence of all kinds that Ireland has suffered for three centuries, she still exists. Famine, carnage, massacre, all have failed to exhaust her. There is no longer time for self-deception; a sincere policy of generous reparation must at once be inaugurated by England, or all the sons of Ireland will unite to deliver their mother country.

Irish emigrants fleeing from famine, or driven from their homes because they could not pay their rent, dared the perils of the sea in floating

charnel-houses, in which the human cargo was lessened every hour by starvation and exhaustion. They went to seek another country which would be less cruel to them. They landed on the shores of Canada and of the United States, with hatred of England in their hearts, but also a burning love for their Irish home. A miserable seed for the harvest of the future did devastated Ireland cast on a foreign shore! From this seed Fenianism has sprung. The tares have mingled with the wheat; and from across the ocean that bore these despairing emigrants will come revenge upon their oppressors.

The opportune moment will be decided by some agrarian agitation in Scotland, a revolt in India, or a foreign war. On that day, my noble Lords, where will you find means of resistance? It will then be too late, and the question will be settled by Revolution, since you would not allow it to be solved by Law. But the time has not yet come for entire deliverance, and until Ireland belongs to the Irish, India to the

Indians, and Egypt to the Egyptians, England will continue to rule her states and her colonies. Ireland might be easily quieted now if Home Rule were granted her; but would a local Parliament be a lasting remedy? It may be doubted. Reforms will not suffice until the old rancour, the inveterate enmity constantly stirred up by agitators, is entirely destroyed.

The great agitator, Mr. Parnell, is considered by the Irish as a second Liberator. A true Spartan, utterly indifferent to the pleasures of life, he is chief of the Home Rulers, and the one most feared by the English Parliament as an "irreconcilable." It was he who, at Cincinnati in 1880, made this declaration to his American brethren, "No one of us will be satisfied until we have destroyed the last link that binds Ireland to England."

An orator by the force of his convictions rather than by natural eloquence, he is only entirely himself when addressing his constituents, an ever-increasing body; for the whole of Ireland contends for him at each election. He can do

much good or much ill to his country. The journal *United Ireland* is his organ. The ministers recognize his power, and treat him with deference, even with consideration.

In a previous letter I had an opportunity of mentioning Lord Spencer, the Viceroy or Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Among the chief secretaries who have governed Ireland, Mr. Forster and Mr. Trevelyan have made the deepest impression; but what can a minister do when the laws that he enforces are tyrannical laws, mere engines for the oppression of the people whom he governs?

The present minister is Mr. Bannerman, a person of moderate abilities, who talks little, but works hard; he is rich, superior to temptations, practical, and just. He is a Scotchman and a Liberal. Mr. Trevelyan was sensitive, Mr. Forster susceptible; but Mr. Bannerman possesses a serenity quite above provocation, though he allows no one to intrude or encroach upon him; and it would be dangerous to try to bribe him. He has courage and good sense,

but his heart is as hard as his head is strong, and he is utterly incapable of enthusiasm.

The Irish are a sociable, intelligent, and witty people, gifted with marvellous elasticity and a sympathetic, generous nature; very clear-sighted, and endowed with a spirit of organization and administration, but indolent and uncertain. The upper classes in Ireland are well educated and very agreeable in society.

The English justly appreciate the intellectual value of their neighbours, and take its great men from the Emerald Isle, without regarding themselves as its debtors, for they carefully ignore the source of their wealth. Among the illustrious dead, how many names of Irishmen can one enumerate without a moment's thought, such as Wellington, Sheridan, Swift, Moore, and Goldsmith. Lord Dufferin, Lord Charles Beresford, and Lord Wolseley, are in men's mouths to-day, while many leading journalists, eloquent preachers, distinguished men in all the professions, are natives of Ireland.

THIRTEENTH LETTER.

THE MEN OF THE DAY.

In this letter I am about to speak of some leading politicians, not included in any previous group, of remarkable men in the army and navy, and of a few other people.

To begin with, I will take Mr. Forster, ex-Secretary of State for Ireland, the most variable weathercock in a political world; the word "tergiversator" must have been invented for him. Starting as a Radical, he has gradually become a link between Conservatives and Liberals. The world begins and ends for him in the House of Commons, or, at most, does not extend beyond the Lords, and when he is busy in getting a law passed, he thinks only of

the success of the moment, and troubles himself very little about the effect the law will have when it is in operation; yet he has proposed some useful measures, the Education Bill in 1870, and the Ballot Bill in 1872. He speaks well without being an orator, and under an air of simple goodnature conceals strong common sense, practical sagacity, and consummate skill.

His wife is charming, amiable, and refined, and the diplomatic world crowds her drawing-room.

Although Lord Dufferin has just left us, to govern India, the important part that he has played makes him so prominent, and the task that he is now fulfilling is so closely allied with the greatest interests of England that I cannot be silent about the ex-Viceroy of Canada, the ex-Ambassador at St. Petersburg, Constantinople, &c.

A liberal, generous, keen politician, a born leader, clever, and patient, very popular, a consummate administrator, he is distinguished in every way, and has everywhere acquired re-

spect and esteem. He captivates those whom he governs by the charm of his manners, by his generous hospitality, his exquisite courtesy, his impartiality, his upright principles. Nothing escapes him; in Canada, he studied the country and its resources thoroughly; in London he has raised the tone of society, and gained the name of "our only diplomatist." In a new country he quickly takes the measure of his adversaries, and fights them with their own weapons. His experience in Russia, Turkey, and Egypt has well prepared him for India. An indefatigible worker, he does everything himself with the help of a single private secretary. He has sound judgment and perfect tact; he polishes and repolishes his speeches until they are models of literary excellence, and at this moment is writing a book on Russia, which will certainly be very interesting. His courage equals his energy, and if he had been appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland many disasters would have been avoided, and many improvements effected. As a man he is eclectic,

original, eccentric; very English in appearance, with a deceptive Mephistopheles air, an eye-glass is always in his eye. His after-dinner speaking is unrivalled, and he knows how to make a compliment in a few words worth more than volumes. Thus he thrilled old Moltke with pleasure by saying, "I have shaken hands with Wellington, and now I am shaking hands with the greatest soldier living."

His receptions are rigorously select, and never exceed two hundred guests. At his soirées, charades are often acted, and he takes a brililant part He is a wonderful story-teller, and occasionally condescends to a comic style. He is very popular wherever he goes, and much liked by all who know him. Lord Dufferin is certainly an ornament to Ireland, and in India he may accomplish great things, if circumstances are not too strong for him. He is not yet sixty years old.

Now I will speak of Bradlaugh; although after the elegance and distinction of Lord Dufferin, you may think him a vulgar topic.

Bradlaugh is the most advanced man in the country, and has been compared to Danton. If he has the same power, the same tragic gaiety in the midst of national troubles, he has a great deal more cunning. Formerly a dragoon, then a solicitor's clerk, he made himself known by his lectures on atheism, Malthusianism, and republicanism. His physical strength, and his unlimited audacity, have given him great influence with the masses; his profound faith in himself and in his mission compels their admiration. He is a powerful speaker, but delights in quibbles, and is more of a lawyer than a statesman. In Parliament he is an *enfant terrible* whose mouth must be shut at every moment to prevent his making revelations which would convulse the House with horror and indignation. His programme is simple: Disestablishment of the Church, abolition of monarchy, universal suffrage, nationalization of the land, suppression of the aristocracy. You know how the House has treated him as a reprobate, suspended, and excluded him. Not

being permitted to take the oath, he sits at the door like an outsider, not among the other members. He has a keen, observant mind; his eccentricity is only on the surface; and in any great social agitation I should not wonder if he took the lead.

Sir Wilfrid Lawson—a Radical—the inveterate enemy of alcohol, has not precisely a "holiday" face; public-houses are a horror to him, and every year the anti-beer baronet brings forward a "Permissive Prohibition Bill," for the entire closing of public-houses on the Sabbath day.

Sir Thomas Brassey is the son of a great financier, great constructor of railways, and great philanthropist, who was one of the most upright, the most honourable, and the most benevolent men of his time. He employed nearly 80,000 workmen at a time, and constructed railways costing 17,000,000*l.* His life was most exemplary. His son, Sir Thomas Brassey, passed his childhood in France. He is a devoted son, well-informed, practical and

useful, and a remarkable book, "Work and Wages," proves him to be a capable writer. His place in Parliament is enviable; the justice of his views with regard to the relations of Labour and Capital is much appreciated; while his acquaintance with all maritime matters, ports and docks, makes him valuable. Although he is not an orator, he is always listened to with attention. He sits among the Liberals, and has recently been appointed Secretary of the Admiralty. He is an excellent amateur sailor, and considered the best pilot in England. He has made a voyage round the world in his own boat, the *Sunbeam*. He is affable and sociable, although he always seems preoccupied with some mental labour, and looks absent or pensive.

Lady Brassey is a person of wide sympathies and great talent. She interests herself much in the question of the emancipation of women, and presides at meetings held on this subject. She writes well, and has published a very interesting nautical diary.

Before leaving the politicians, I wish, in the name of humanity, to pay a tribute of admiration and gratitude to that great, good man, Mr. Plimsoll. While others are busily inventing means for destroying their fellow-creatures, Plimsoll, by a law, forcibly extorted from Parliament, has saved the lives of thousands of obscure heroes of the sea. But he is dreaded for his truth-telling, and has not been re-elected. His powerful and eloquent book is an outburst of feeling from a generous heart.

I now turn to the army. The English army has at its head two generals, round each of whom stands a group of partisans—General Roberts and Lord Wolseley, with their respective followers, the Robertists and the Wolseleyites. Much jealousy and many passions rage under cover of these two names. There are several brave officers whom I should like to name, but the stir that has been made about these two generals forces me to speak especially of them.

General Roberts, a man of extraordinary energy, has a very fine head, and very haughty way of holding it. He cannot be exactly said to be a born soldier, and yet he possesses all the qualities that command success. He demands from his men all that they can give, but never more, and succeeds in attaching them to him. His brilliant campaign in Afghanistan displayed all his military talents, and although he has learnt much by experience, yet he owes something to chance. He is very popular in the army, and the Queen likes him very much, and has given him several proofs of her regard.

Lord Wolseley of Cairo, the conqueror of the King of Dahomey, the hero of Tel-el-Kebir, the commander-in-chief of the army in the Soudan, is the most restless of men. The Ashantees called him "the man who never stops." He has won his position inch by inch, and has great military ability. Unlike General Roberts, he is always ready to receive a new idea, to weigh it and to assimilate it; but he

is head-strong, arbitrary, intolerant, vindictive, and unjust, and he cannot endure contradiction. He possesses an iron frame, and a determined will. He is not more lenient to himself than to others. When he was in Cyprus he was attacked by fever, but—more indomitable than the malady—he mounted his horse, and in spite of his weakness and the trembling of the ague, holding on as well as he could in his exhausted condition, he galloped round the island to the amazement of every one. The shaking, the heat, and the fatigue caused a reaction, and he was cured.

Like Louis XIV., Napoleon, and Wellington, Wolseley is a keen judge of men, and chooses those who will serve himself best. He is liked by his own partisans, but detested by a great part of the army; and the Robertists, in spite of their patriotism, feel little regret for his recent failure. He also has a good many enemies in the navy. In private life he has agreeable manners. He is short in stature, but his head is well shaped. He is over fifty, and

was born in Ireland. He married one of the prettiest Canadians ever imported into England.

The most popular of the foreign princes in the service of England is Prince Edward of Saxe Weimar, brother of Prince Gustavus of Saxe Weimar, whom I mentioned in my letters from Vienna. I cannot speak of Prince Edward and Prince Gustavus without recalling the sympathetic face of another brother, Prince Hermann, who lives at Stuttgart. He is a man of exceptional moral worth, perhaps the most admirable prince in Europe, and I admire and love him for the largeness and nobility of his mind, and the warmth of his heart.

Prince Edward is a naturalized Englishman, and was born during his mother's residence at Bushey Park in 1823. Her sister, Queen Adelaide, widow of William IV., having no children, adopted the young prince, undertook his education, brought him up as her own son, and made a thorough Englishman of him. He entered the Grenadier Guards, and served as captain during the Crimean War, taking part in

the battles of Alma and Balaclava. He rose to the rank of general of infantry, and will soon receive the rank of Field-marshal. He is now Governor of Portsmouth.

His wife, a sister of the Duke of Richmond, is a very great lady, and does the honours of her house like a queen. She has a large share in the popularity of her husband.

The navy boasts of many great men, but I will only mention Admiral Lord Alcester and Lord Charles Beresford, whose names are intimately connected with the Egyptian campaign.

Lord Alcester, Commander of the Channel Fleet, is sixty-four years of age. He was entrusted with the bombardment of Alexandria. He is one of those rare men who have the good fortune to succeed without making enemies. He is every man's friend, and never having wounded or offended any, he is extremely popular in the navy, where popularity is difficult to win. He enjoys the confidence of his subordinates, and he could lead them everywhere. His fine figure, that looks so well in

his admiral's uniform, as he paces the quarter-deck, has got him the nickname of "the Swell of the Ocean." Much liked in society, he has a large circle of friends, and his epistolary taste leads him to keep up a very active correspondence.

A glorious career may be predicted for the gallant tar, Lord Charles Beresford, whose services as commander of the *Condor* are still fresh in every one's memory. Frank and simple, of a generous, open disposition, he is always ready to do noble deeds, and has more than once risked his life to save the lives of the humblest men who were drowning, and whom no one else on board would have assisted. In any danger he is always well to the front. He is a great friend and favourite of the Prince of Wales, and went with him to India as naval aide-de-camp. He will one day have the command of the Mediteranean Fleet. He is much regretted in Parliament, where he sat for six years. His speeches, careful, but not pedantic, earnest, and unaffected, were distinguished for

their tact and good taste, and he is as much at home in the House as on the deck of his ship. He is a moderate Conservative.

In the first campaign in Egypt Lord Wolseley did not give Lord Charles Beresford the position he deserved. After services so brilliant and so decisive, he had a right to the first rank in the staff of the Khedive. But he has the future before him. In the campaign of the Soudan he has done wonders, and Lord Wolseley has complimented him in the presence of the whole army.

In the expedition across the desert Lord Charles found himself admiral of a fleet of camels. An amusing incident is his finding, in one of his first campaigns, a little Chinese boy, who became his servant, and was one of the most comical little creatures ever seen. Lord Charles Beresford's wife is one of the prettiest and most charming women in London.

Col. Henderson, the head of the police, is a curious and interesting person. He has occupied a number of positions which most people

would not have considered very delightful. He was sent as Government Commissioner to settle the boundaries of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; was almost killed, and remained for five days without food. Next he was sent to New South Wales, as head of the Convict System there; afterwards he was made Director and Inspector-General of London Prisons. He is now at the head of the police force, a post that he fills as if he had been specially made by heaven for the purpose. There is not a policeman who does not respect and love him. He is a loyal-hearted, kindly man, quite unsuspicious; so that in his presence no one feels inclined to make mysteries, but becomes frank and confidential. He has never betrayed a professional secret; and yet what curious memoirs he could write! He is an artist of some merit, and a pleasant companion.

One word about the Attorney-General, Sir Henry James. He is the most witty man in London.

Who does not know the Director of the

South Kensington Museum, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Owen, the author and organizer of all the great exhibitions in which England has taken part? Fifty-six years of age, the son of a sailor, plain-dealing, obliging, with frank, agreeable manners, and a kindly nature, a hard worker, a great linguist, and thoroughly well acquainted with his Museum.

Let us now talk of the best-known and most envied woman in the three kingdoms, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. Her grandfather, a Scottish Lowlander, married, for his second wife, the celebrated actress, Miss Mellon, afterwards Duchess of St. Albans, who, at her death, left all her fortune to Miss Angela Burdett, who thus became the richest heiress in London, and had to reject many aspirants to her hand. She was, however, a woman of good sense, judgment, and energy, and she skilfully piloted her way, avoiding rocks and shoals, and took for her companion and ally a Mrs. Brown, who remained faithful to her all her life.

The Baroness was a friend of Napoleo n III. Her fortune is very large, and she devotes much of it to good works. She has founded a bishopric, and built Columbia Market; indeed her benevolence and her generosity are as inexhaustible as her wealth. She has been the patroness and friend of many men who have since become eminent; Sir James Brook, the Rajah of Sarawak, Henry Irving, &c. With an impulsive nature, and much warmth of heart, she has also great sagacity and self-control; she is remarkably well informed, and keeps herself *au courant* of every subject.

When she gives fêtes it is done right royally. One day she invited the whole of the Belgian volunteers.

About six years ago she lost her faithful companion, and the death of this valuable friend induced her to alleviate her solitary existence by marrying her Secretary, Mr. Bartlett. Mr. Bartlett is a handsome man, tall, and well made, with regular features, and a

very agreeable face. Mr. Bartlett is sagacious, energetic, and intelligent. He understands the importance of his position as the husband of the baroness. His wife is saluted by the people as if she were a queen.

FOURTEENTH LETTER.

POWERS IN THE STATE.

CLUBS—THE PRESS.

THE mass of the people imagine that a state is ruled by means of great institutions; but in reality a state is governed by influences, and the men who bear official titles, and are seen, and judged, and considered responsible by the public are only the outward manifestation of all that acts upon them.

Mr. Gladstone made war in Egypt under the pressure of the capitalists.

How many statesmen, like Lord Hartington, form their will on the will of another! How many obey occult influences! How many are the slaves of interests foreign to that of the State; interests of money, family!

Under cover of social customs, political *salons* play a very active part in London Parliamentary life.

I have already spoken of the principal political *salons* of London: that of Lord Spencer is the most attractive; Lord Granville's is too official; and the receptions of Sir W. Vernon Harcourt are dull. Lord Salisbury and Sir Algernon Borthwick have *salons* that are largely attended.

Many influences make themselves felt in politics; there is the influence of the Church, the influence of the universities, the influence of leagues, agrarian leagues, peace parties, parties of arbitration, of education, &c., which constantly harass the ministers.

But the great authority that governs England, a power unknown in other countries, is the influence of the Clubs and the Press.

I will not try to give you a description of all the clubs; it would fill volumes; I will only sketch the political clubs.

Clubs.

The *rôle* played by clubs in England in no way resembles that which belongs to those institutions on the Continent. They represent every opinion, all social wants and all pleasures. There are clubs political, diplomatic, literary, dramatic, financial, naval, military, &c.—the list is a long one. There are also philanthropic clubs, religious clubs, clubs for workmen and clubs for women. I am silent upon those that only belong to sports, music, art, &c., and those that have no special aim.

The most interesting club of all, that which makes and unmakes men, the occult force that governs England, is the political club. The Carlton Club, fortress of the Tories, and the Reform Club, the entrenched camp of the Liberals, form the ante-chamber to Parliament. Laws are there discussed, decisions taken, lines of conduct decided on before arriving at the Palace of Westminster, which has itself been called "The Great Western Club." There meet-

ings are held by groups of politicians, and the policy of the country is planned. A leader of Parliament never fails a meeting of his party at the club, although he may not be present at the sitting of the House.

A little incident will prove how jealous the clubs are of the integrity of their principles. Mr. Carvell Williams, the champion of the party for the separation of Church and State, having tried to enter the Reform Club, was blackballed for his political opinions. The club wished to show that the principle of the separation of Church and State did not form a part of the programme of its party.

Mr. Gladstone laid, a short time ago, the first stone of the National Liberal Club in Northumberland Avenue, which already counts about 3500 applicants in the provinces, and 2000 or 3000 in London. The aim of these two clubs is not to have, as formerly, a kind of choice restaurant, but to create a centre, where electors can exchange their opinions, members meet their leaders, where the party can hold its meetings,

and debate its resolutions—a kind of grand preparatory council, a chamber of opinion, headquarters whence orders will be issued.

There are many other clubs besides those I have mentioned. The Conservatives have the Conservative, the Beaconsfield, the Junior Carlton, the St. Stephen's, &c.; the Liberals the Devonshire, of which Lord Hartington is the President, the Cobden, &c. There is also the St. James's, the club of ambassadors and the diplomatic world, and a number of others, including a French Club, *la Société Nationale Française*, that is in a very prosperous condition.

The clubs have long governed the country; they were the hot-beds of politics; newspapers got their inspiration from them, and echoed their ideas, deciding all questions after them; and the provinces received their opinions ready-made from the journals, which had taken theirs from the clubs. Now a new movement of decentralization has begun; politicians have reversed the old custom, and instead of shutting themselves up in their clubs, they go

to their counties, make speeches, listen to and consult the people, and then come back and make their wants known in London. It is a reversion of things that has been very salutary to the country, and it is due especially to Mr. Gladstone, the propagator of this principle, for which reason he is all-powerful in the provinces. The influence of the political clubs is, however, still very great; they remain the basis of operation for the manœuvres of each Parliamentary group; and the politicians and leading journals, feeling the common danger to their influence, have become reconciled to each other, and coalesced.

The Press.

The Continental press gives no idea whatever of the English press. It is impossible to conceive its importance without having made a special study of it. The press everywhere holds the first place, and it is not, as it has been called, the fourth estate, but the first. It is the

press that governs England; a great journal like the *Daily Telegraph* is as powerful as Mr. Gladstone, and the *Times* is more powerful than both Houses of Parliament.

The press has a legislative initiative to which Parliament submits; it inspects and controls the Ministry, and fulfils the functions of the Ministers themselves. It has become the best of ambassadors, and is justly called "the grand inquisitor of the nation." The journals compose a popular Parliament—a court of justice, a school of criticism on all the questions of the day, politics, morality, religion, taste, fashion, &c. And as advertising plays a considerable part in English life, the newspaper is the greatest merchant in all England.

To what does the press owe its power, which dates from the Reform Bill of 1831? To the following causes:—

Journals of party, of conflict, and of recrimination have almost disappeared; the organs of any value are bought by companies, and do not belong to any particular Minister or

member, or to any special Parliamentary group. They have their individual tone, but are completely independent. This is the secret of their power; and one of the causes of that independence is that no article is signed.

The English press has a high position, and is entitled to the respect of all for its perfect honour. The journalists are able men, who inspire their readers with absolute confidence, never bringing each other into disrepute by injudicious attacks. Personalities between journalists have ceased, and duels are unknown. Thanks to its system of correspondence all over the world, the English press is usually better informed than the Ministers themselves, and is less exposed to being misled by ignorant, interested, or mistaken ambassadors. Its leading articles are like Ministerial speeches. It seizes upon all great ideas, treats them with dignity, elevates them, makes the country take an interest in them, and forces them upon the legislators. It was the press that fought the battles

of the Corn Laws, Free Trade, and nearly every other great reform.

It may almost be said that the English press has organized England, and that in the accomplishment of this work it discovered its own power. Sir Robert Peel often said that, supported by the press, he could defy Parliament.

How many times Members and Ministers have found their policy and materials for their speeches in the arguments of the *Times!*

A few years ago the journals were not the leaders of public opinion, they only expressed it; but the press became independent, and suffering no tutelage from Government or Parliament, assumes the glorious responsibility of leading opinion, and with a phalanx of such remarkable men at its head, no one contests its right to be the pioneer and scout.

The press has destroyed the secret life of courts, parliaments, embassies, finance, business, &c.; everything is now done in broad daylight, and everything is open to the reporter.

The society papers have their moral influence, like the political and social satires of the comic journals; and let us add that the English press shows more tact and good taste than the public itself.

The monopoly of the guidance of public opinion does not belong entirely to the great London newspapers. Every town now has its daily papers, which have followed the example of those of the metropolis, and are as much respected and listened to. The provincial press is as rich and as well-informed as that of London. The *Manchester Guardian*, for instance, makes nearly 40,000*l.* a year, and rivals the *Times*. The influence of the London newspapers upon the provinces has therefore diminished, especially since politicians, escaping from the too exclusive atmosphere of the clubs, have addressed themselves directly to the country, and instead of dictating to it, learn its actual needs and wishes.

FIFTEENTH LETTER.

JOURNALS AND JOURNALISTS.

In London the press enjoys unlimited liberty, but has the good taste and prudence not to abuse it. Only the "Society" journals are ever prosecuted, and to them the process is a good advertisement.

There are in London several hundred newspapers; these may be divided into—

Large and small daily papers.

Special journals, local, comic, illustrated and society papers.

Reviews and magazines.

Miscellaneous publications.

The most important daily papers are, the *Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Standard*, the *Daily*

News the *Morning Post*, the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *St. James's Gazette*, the *Globe*, and the *Echo*.

The *Times*, which is the greatest European newspaper, for a long time enjoyed absolute sovereignty; but now it has rivals in the journals that I have just named. It belongs to no political party; and in order to preserve its entire independence and its neutrality, it keeps aloof from politicians in office. The *Times* is especially the business journal—the organ of the city. For two generations its authority has prevailed in all Parliamentary and legislative questions; it is still an oracle for nine persons out of ten, and when it gives its opinion in a discussion, the cause that it supports is won. All foreign journals analyze or reproduce its articles, and in certain countries the policy of the *Times* is looked upon as the policy of England, and is accepted or disputed by friends and foes in the form given it by the journal of the city. In India, Cairo, and Constantinople, the *Times* lays down the law with regard to the Eastern

question and its connection with the interests of England.

All the most eminent writers of the political and literary world have contributed to the *Times;* and even serious authors who generally prefer to write in the reviews rather than in newspapers, have always made an exception in its favour. Barnes used to read the leading reviews with great care, and whenever he discovered a man of mark would attach him to the staff of the *Times.* Now the great rival organs have contributors who equal those of the *Times;* but no other paper has the prestige that gives such importance to everything published in it. It is the only journal that costs threepence, all the others being sold at a penny.

The *Daily Telegraph* is next, if not equal in importance to the *Times.* It has shown intelligence in the choice of its contributors, and was the means of introducing George Augustus Sala—the most original and perhaps the most popular of English journalists. It was the *Daily Telegraph* that sent Stanley to explore

Africa, and Mr. George Smith, the archæologist, to excavate Assyria and Mesopotamia, where he found marvels, and among other things the Assyrian narrative of the deluge. It is a curious fact that the *Daily Telegraph* came as a bad debt into the hands of Messrs. Levy and Lawson, who now owe the greatest part of their fortune to it. Formerly Liberal, it has become Conservative, or Liberal-Conservative, and it is asserted that this conversion was effected by Lord Beaconsfield. It is a journal of the highest value, admirably well-informed, prudent, thoughtful, and analytical in its opinions, and it possesses great authority.

The *Standard*, the champion of Protestantism, the defender of the Throne and of the Constitution, had long been simply an echo of the Conservative leaders, the reflection of Lord Derby and Disraeli; but since Mr. Mudford has been at its head, it has become an independent Conservative. Like the *Telegraph*, the *Standard* is a paper of the first rank, and any one interested in politics is bound to read it, for all questions

are thoroughly discussed in it. If a journal were not now independent, it would soon find itself without readers. The time has passed when Pitt bought the *Courier*, tried, but in vain, to buy the *Times*, and founded the *Sun* to serve his party.

The *Daily News*, called by Mr. Chamberlain the organ of the Dissenters, is now threatened with the withdrawal of their patronage, for they accuse it of not taking sufficient interest in them, and of too great leniency towards the Established Church. The *Daily News* can afford to disregard these reproaches. It is the organ of Gladstonian Liberalism, though it does not hesitate to attack the Cabinet when errors are committed. Its success has greatly increased since the Franco-German War, as Mr. Robinson, its editor, had the good fortune to secure the services of Mr. Archibald Forbes, who has raised it to the unique position it now occupies. Another contributor, Mr. Labouchere, voluntarily stayed in Paris during the siege, and sent such remarkable accounts of it that

they greatly added to the success of the journal. The *Daily News* is the most important of the Liberal organs; it therefore does not love Lord Randolph Churchill, and reduces his speeches to ten lines. It has boasted a number of celebrated contributors. Mr. Frank H. Hill's "Political Portraits" do honour both to the writer and to the journal that published them.

The *Morning Post*, a journal of the fashionable world, is directed by Sir Algernon Borthwick, an eminent writer and good speaker. It was formerly the organ of Lord Palmerston and Napoleon III., which proves the good understanding that existed between these two. Created in 1772, it is the oldest of the London newspapers. It is independent, although it has always supported the Throne, the Church, the rights of property, and the aristocracy, to which it entirely belongs. The *Morning Post* always has special and very valuable information on diplomatic affairs. Sir Algernon Borthwick has studied politics abroad, and is much imbued with French ideas. He is a perfect man of the

world, with polished manners, and is much liked and esteemed.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* was originated as an evening paper, and with the idea of applying the system of reviews to newspapers. It was Conservative; but four years ago Mr. John Morley, a nephew of the proprietor, inherited the journal, and had the audacity to transform it the very next day into a Radical organ. He lost many of his readers, but found a great many more; and it has now become the special organ of cultivated and independent Radicalism. It was, and still is, a journal written by gentlemen for gentlemen. It was the first to call attention to the defective state of the navy. Mr. John Morley, M.P., an extremely agreeable and very distinguished man, is one of the ornaments of his profession, and does honour to it.

The *St. James's Gazette* is an excellent journal of criticism, politics, and social facts.

I must pass in silence over hundreds of journals in London, and only mention a few of

the most interesting publications, such as *Truth*, the *Referee*, the *Sunday Times*, the *World*, the *Athenæum*, *Tit Bits*, the *Stage*, a theatrical journal that gives twenty-four pages of news for twopence, and the *Era*. Must I remind you of the comic illustrated journals, such as *Punch*, *Judy*, *Fun*, *Funny Folks*, &c.? *Punch* has been fortunate enough to possess for more than thirty years the rival of Garvarni, the charming artist Du Maurier. I must give special mention to the best and most satirical society paper, *Vanity Fair*, in which a portrait caricature of one of the celebrities of the day appears every week, signed "Ape" (Pelegrini) and "Spy" (Leslie Ward); these are masterpieces of drawing and of humour. The journal is edited with tact and skill by Mr. Thomas Gibson Bowles, who signs "Jehu Junior" to the excellent articles written by his hand. *Vanity Fair* is the most amusing society journal in existence, and I have been glad to borrow some excellent things from it.

The reviews are to newspapers what the

House of Lords is to the Commons, a moderating power. The *Edinburgh, Quarterly, Contemporary, Westminster, Nineteenth Century*, and the *Fortnightly Reviews* are great and powerful organs known all over the world. The *Saturday Review* sets an example of complete independence; like the *Times*, it even excludes from its staff politicians in office to whatever party they belong. It possesses the best pens of Oxford and of Cambridge, of the Temple and of Lincoln's Inn, of the Church and of the State. The *Spectator* is a formidable rival to it.

English journals have no *feuilletons*. Before telegraphic communication the rivalry in the press consisted of how to obtain and publish dispatches from India in the quickest manner. Now telegraphs and railways have combined to satisfy the requirements of English readers at a low rate. A wire to India only costs the journals 40*l*. a month, and they have the right to send a hundred words for a shilling. The London newspapers, in order to compete with those of the provinces, have united to send special

trains at 3 a.m. that carry the earliest issues in all directions. I may add that the press has its agencies, the Central News Agency, the Press Association, and Reuter's Telegraphic Service, and its head-quarters are Fleet Street and the Strand.

Journalism, although so honoured in England, does not lead to anything, and opens no door, especially not that of Parliament. The journalists remain anonymous and unknown, and never openly take part in any public struggle; they have general rather than personal prestige, and, except for the proprietors of large journals, their profession does not lead to fortune. The journalists sitting in Parliament do not owe their position to their pens.

Mr. George Augustus Sala is the most popular journalist in London. He has been an author, engraver, lecturer, critic, caricaturist, and pantomime writer. Hardworking, energetic, possessing all kinds of talents, he devoted himself to journalism, and as correspondent to the

Daily Telegraph his reputation was instantly made. He is the most witty and the most amusing writer in the world; he depicts all that he sees in an animated, striking manner, and lends new interest to the most ordinary subjects. He is a very amiable man, with a great mind and a great heart, and his knowledge is perfectly encyclopedic.

But the most extraordinary person among journalists is Mr. Archibald Forbes. At first sight you would take him for a German officer, with his white helmet, white jacket and breeches, and high boots, a knapsack, and large field-glasses, and a pipe stuck in his waistband. The son of a Scotch clergyman, with a passion for adventure, he first entered the army, when he wrote very curious descriptions of military life, and afterwards he became a journalist. He is the most perfect type of the war correspondent.

He witnessed the Indian famine, and afterwards went to India with the Prince of Wales. He followed the Carlist War, and the war in

Servia, also the campaigns in Ashantee and Zululand.

Mr. Forbes's writings are not mere reporting, but historical documents. He has described royal visits, explosions in mines, battles, shipwrecks, and sieges, and he has risked his life a hundred times. He passes about two years out of seven in London. He is a widower, and has two charming daughters.

From time to time he gives lectures about his distant enterprises, and I have often gone to London on purpose to enjoy the treat.

Mr. Burnand, the editor of *Punch*, the prolific author of a number of burlesques, and the adapter of a great many French pieces, is an ardent Catholic. He is a very brilliant man, and a hard worker; he has almost transformed *Punch*, and his "Happy Thoughts" are some of the most amusing that have ever been published. He has a dozen children, many friends, and no enemies.

Mr. Edmund Yates, the founder of the *World*, was for many years employed at the Post

Office. He has written some novels and his own memoirs, edited *Temple Bar Magazine*, given very successful lectures in America, and travelled a great deal in Europe as correspondent of the *New York Herald*.

Who does not know Mr. Labouchère, the editor of *Truth* and Member of Parliament, who wants to suppress the Monarchy, the Church, and the Lords? Many people try to appear better than they are; Mr. Labouchère endeavours to give a formidable idea of himself; he is a kind, generous, warm-hearted man. His conversation is most attractive, most brilliant, and most amusing. He is fifty-three years old, and entered the diplomatic circle before trying journalism. He has been editor of newspapers and manager of theatres. In Parliament he is a new Juvenal, and much dreaded. He has undertaken great commercial and financial speculations.

Baron Reuter is a German: he established his first telegraphic agency at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1849, and came to London in 1851, as soon

as the first submarine cable was laid. His success dates from the day when he gave the threatening speech of Napoleon III. to the Austrian Ambassador—preliminary to the war in Italy—to London an hour after it had been made.

Now he has not only the monopoly of the foreign news of the entire world, but no other agency can compete with him. In the smallest towns he has agents in communication with ministers, bankers, governors, all those who furnish news; and this man who holds in his hand the telegraphic wires of all Europe—who knows before any one all the political and financial news of the world, yet has never used this mighty machinery for any personal end. What greater praise can be awarded him?

During the Franco-Prussian War, Berlin learnt through him the triumphs of the German army. A naturalized Englishman, he was created a baron by a German prince in gratitude for his services. Respected, rich, power-

ful, he is most popular in society. His wife is amiable and hospitable. English society has made the baron warmly welcome, and he returns its goodwill by great affection for England.

SIXTEENTH LETTER.

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC MEN.

Scientific men are scarcely to be found in society, not because it is closed to them, but these learned people are very independent, and detest fashion. They whose genius directs human thought cannot find any pleasure in drawing-rooms. Study is their reward and also their only pleasure. Darwin, a simple, unassuming man, whose mind influenced the whole world, did not even appear at the Royal Society, or at most, only went there once a year. He preferred his little paradise at Down, in Kent, and the society of his children and his books.

The Royal Society has not the solemnity of

the Société de France; it is a kind of scientific club, and, like all English institutions, more private than official. The number of members is unlimited, and they do not receive any salary; but, on the contrary, pay a subscription in order to belong to it.

They are not troubled by any uniform, and know nothing of badges, precedence, or restrictive regulations. Except that its advice is asked by the Government on rare occasions when there is a question of some scientific mission, the Royal Society has nothing to do with the State. It has about 600 members, and makes itself known to the public by publishing at its own expense "Philosophical Transactions." The members of the Royal Society are worthy citizens who meet once a week at about half-past eight in the evening, and religiously retire before twelve o'clock.

The Royal Institution is very fashionable. The lectures given there are well attended, and offer an intellectual treat, for they are delivered by the greatest scientific men in England.

Besides the meetings of the Royal Institution, there are those of the Birkbeck, of the British Association, &c.—a mere list of their names would take me too long.

Amongst lecturers, Professor Tyndall is the favourite, and occupies, at the Royal Institution, the room formerly inhabited by Faraday and Davy. He is well known in Switzerland, where he makes scientific researches every year among the glaciers. Those who have not the good fortune to be admitted to his lectures, or who have not climbed mountains with him, have never seen him; for these are the only occasions when he can be found out of his laboratory. These apostles of science for the love of science are the true type of the English *savant;* and in their society you breathe an atmosphere of honour, integrity, and of untiring work. The greatest simplicity rules their lives. To describe one is to describe them all, and though I could talk to you about Siemens, Ferguson, Huxley, Sir Joseph Hooker, and many more, I will content myself

with a few words about Proctor and Sir John Lubbock, two very interesting types.

Professor Proctor, the great astronomer, is Secretary to the Royal Cosmographical Society. He has given lectures in Australia and in America. He is only forty-six years of age, but has written much and produced much. He is the editor of *Knowledge*.

Sir John Lubbock, the patron of ants, is a very interesting person, member and president of several scientific societies; most highly thought of in the commercial world (he is a banker), in the political world (he is an M.P.), in the learned world (he is a naturalist), in the literary world (he is the author of a remarkable book on the origin of civilization and the primitive condition of man); honours and titles have fallen at his feet without his having sought them; they are simple tributes of respect and admiration.

He loves flowers, children, bees, ants—everything lilliputian in nature; the weak are the constant objects of his solicitude. A

benefactor to clerks, he promoted the bank holiday, or holiday given four times a year to all clerks and assistants, and called in his honour "Saint Lubbock." His studies on ants are as interesting and amusing as a novel.

In politics, Sir John Lubbock, who represents the University of London, is Liberal, but moderate in his views. He does not seek the overthrow of the English Church or the House of Lords, or of any established institution. He is just, upright, and independent; considerations of party have no influence with him.

What can I say of literary men in so short a space? they deserve special study, and an entire volume. Drama and fiction have many writers, and the women who use the pen occupy a brilliant place in the phalanx. The novels of the late George Eliot, Miss Braddon, Mrs. Henry Wood, Mrs. Oliphant, and of many others, are well known all over the Continent. Death has lately made great gaps in the world of literature, and struck down Darwin, Anthony Trollope, George Eliot,

Thackeray, Carlyle, and a few years ago Dickens and Stuart Mill.

Wilkie Collins may be called the inventor of the sensational novel. His plan is to pique curiosity and excite surprise, enchaining the reader to every page, and forcing him to go on, even against his will, to the end of the book. The plot of his novels is a labyrinth. Who does not know "Armadale," "No Name," "The Woman in White," &c. ?

In London there are a considerable number of novel-writers, most of whom have ability, and many talent of the highest order.

Poetry possesses Lord Tennyson, the Poet Laureate, a favourite with the Queen, the Court, and the Aristocracy; but who has the great defect of being too English, and of wrapping himself in supreme disdain for everything that is not British. He looks sadly upon things, and writes without enthusiasm or passion. The beautiful and true act upon him, but never take possession of him; and he is still inspired by the fables of history, of which, I think, we have

already heard enough; and though he loves great heroes, he is not himself great enough to measure them. He has a perfect style, and complete mastery over the English language.

It may be said that Tennyson had prepared the way for Ruskin—that strange and mighty critic, who makes or ruins an artist with a stroke of his pen. Ruskin has exercised on his generation an influence as wide and more deep than that of Carlyle. In matters of taste, and in the art of the beautiful, Carlyle suggested many problems, but Ruskin has solved them. Ruskin is an Olympian without being so archaic as Tennyson. His spirit lives in light, and his ideal is not that of our time. He has the antique passion for the beautiful. For more than half a century he has been preaching his crusade, and the ignorant masses are guided by him as by a beacon. He leads them towards the dawn, but does not enlighten them; charms, but cannot convince them; the cultured alone, the elect, appreciate his criti-

cisms and admire them, though they are sometimes rather harsh.

Browning, the antithesis of Tennyson, is always looking forward, thirsting for progress, longing for the ideal. His dreams even go beyond what he can accomplish, he tries to drag inert humanity along with him, and each of his lines says distinctly "Follow me."

Among English poets some turn to the past, others to the future; but they all do their utmost to raise the moral level of the nation by their generous aspirations.

Poets and literary men are much thought of in society, and most of them become rich; for English publishers are intelligent men who leave a large share of the profits to a well-known writer.

SEVENTEENTH LETTER.

PAINTERS AND THEIR STUDIOS.

During the last thirty years art has made great progress in England, and the movement that produced it has been increasing in force every day since 1851. Owing to the impetus then given by the first International Exhibition, the fine arts have begun to shed their beneficent influence over the whole of Great Britain. In London the two principal temples of art are the Royal Academy, in Piccadilly, and the Schools of Art at South Kensington. The Royal Academy is not a State institution, but is governed by a council composed of the principal artists of the country. It holds two exhibitions every year; one in the summer for the works of

modern artists, the second during the winter, of paintings and drawings of the old masters, and of deceased English artists. The success of these exhibitions has become so great, that the Academy received last year the sum of 21,000*l.* for shilling admissions.

The instruction to pupils, given gratuitously by the Academicians, includes drawing, painting, sculpture, and architecture.

In 1835 a commission was named in Parliament, on the proposal of Mr. Ewart, member for Liverpool, to study the best means of spreading a taste and knowledge of the fine arts. A school was opened in 1837, and in 1841 the Government decided to establish schools of design in all the manufacturing districts, and a department of practical arts was created under the superintendence of Sir Henry Cole, who worked for twenty years at the formation of the admirable and unique museum at South Kensington.

The Queen, on opening Parliament in 1853, urged the importance of giving free scope to

cultivation of the fine arts. In 1844, 1295*l.* was spent in Paris on an artistic collection for the School of Design, and 5000*l.* was devoted to the purchase of the best productions of the Exhibition of 1851. The Prince Consort also bought the ground on which the South Kensington Museum now stands.

There are now 160 schools of art in England in connection with this Museum, not counting the multitude of private schools that have been opened for the study of the fine arts. Painting has at length won its rightful place; rich Englishmen all possess a picture-gallery, and a castle without one would do little honour to its owner. Painters are highly thought of, and received in the best society; and the most celebrated artists live in luxurious, indeed princely, mansions.

Fashionable visits to the studios take place on Sunday; and there is even a special "Studio Sunday," a month before the opening of the Academy, when a pilgrimage is made to the studios of favourite artists.

Among the most distinguished representatives of English art are Sir Frederick Leighton, President and Trustee of the Royal Academy, John Everett Millais, Edward Poynter, G. F. Watts, Alma Tadema, Frank Holl, Edwin Long, Herkomer, Hunt, Fildes, Burne, Jones, Baughton, Whistler, Pettie, Ouless, W. Crane, Cooper &c.

Sir Frederick Leighton is, as "Jehu Junior" says, "one of those delicate natures who have succeeded so well in driving out the savage from our human clay, that nothing but the refined gentleman remains." He is a highly accomplished man, the first painter in England, an eminent sculptor, as the distinction he won at the Paris Salons proved. An admirable speaker, a great linguist, an exquisite musician, this gifted artist is also a remarkable tactician, and did honour to the artists' corps of volunteers, of which he was colonel. He is a member of the Institut de France. He is disinterested and unassuming, and for his fellow-artists he expresses nothing but praise and admiration.

He speaks of Gainsborough with religious enthusiasm; and he once spoke to me of the regret with which he had seen in the Bohemian quarters of the Luxembourg in Paris, painters of extraordinary talent who were prevented by poverty from taking their proper place in the world.

Sir Frederick, although rather grey, is in the prime of life. He has studied in all the schools of Europe, especially in Italy. When talking with him his courteous manners and his perfect accent make you think that he is a Parisian, and you fancy you have met him in the Rue de l'Ouest; but suddenly you say, "No, he is an Italian—a son of the Capitol; I remember having seen him lounging along the Corso;" or you may have observed him in the Mosques, or at the Alhambra; for this great traveller has been to all the cradle-lands of art, as far as Persia, and the country of the Moors. I must tell you about the palace he has built for himself in the Holland Park Road—a temple of taste, which even Ruskin might praise. In the entrance-hall every inch of walls and ceiling is adorned by

some work of art; and the floor is inlaid with mosaics of subdued colouring. A large vestibule connects this hall with a sanctuary of art, where one gazes with delight on columns of rare marble, friezes of raised gold, window-frames of marvellous carved wood from the East, walls with precious stuccoes, a vaulted ceiling; from whose centre hangs an enormous Eastern chandelier—a thousand other objects attract notice, and the artistic effects of light capriciously shed on the walls of varying blue are simply fairylike. The walls of the rooms on the ground-floor are hung with pictures by Corot, Constable, and Daubigny; their contents are porcelain from Persia, vases from Rhodes, Japanese hangings, Turkey carpets, and many treasures of the East.

A fine staircase, adorned with rare pictures, leads up to the first floor. Here is a delicious Arabian room; and passing by works of Delacroix, Watts, Tintoret, Sebastian, Del Piombo, &c., one reaches the great studio, where the gems of this museum are accumulated.

But there I must stop, and can only hope that you will one day inspect it for yourself, and enjoy the exquisite courtesy of its owner.

One last word. A man may be known by his books; and Sir Frederick Leighton has in his library the masterpieces of all languages, from Aristotle, Pliny, and Terence, to Goethe and Victor Hugo. He has painted the great frescoes in South Kensington Museum, also many well-known pictures and admirable mural decorations. His statues are life itself, and he is at this moment working at a very fine figure.

Close by is the studio of Mr. Watts, the head of the English Idealistic School, and very well known besides as a painter of portraits, which really seem to live, speak, and move. I saw an excellent one of M. Thiers. Mr. Watts was a great friend and *protégé* of Lord Holland. His first work that attracted notice is the one at Westminster, "Caractacus and his family taken prisoners to Rome."

Whoever you are, you may knock at the door of Mr. Watts' house, and will be admitted with

the simple formality of signing your name in the visitors' book. You enter a square hall containing a hundred or so of pictures by Mr. Watts. If you desire to see him, you then go up to his studio, and two great pictures dawn upon your view, "Death and Love" and "Love leading Life." Both of these form a good expression of his theories, his preferences, and his genius.

At the request of the Museum of Metropolitan Art in New York, he sent fifty of his pictures there; quite a little exhibition in themselves.

I will now take you to the princely abode of Mr. Millais, the master of the realistic school, and a famous *genre* painter. The immense hall, crowded with treasures, is marvellous. A gigantic staircase leads to the landing-place of the first floor; where a seal in bronze coming out of a marble basin, spouts water from its nostrils. The studio is vast, oblong, very high, well lighted, and luxurious, and always contains a few pictures and some life-like portraits.

Mr. Millais was born at Jersey, and brought up at Dinan, where at five years of age he astonished the garrison by his military sketches. His style is his own; he has applied all his intellect to art, and frequently repeats that painting is nothing without thought. Struck by what he called the infidelity to nature in modern art, he formed with Hunt and Rosetti a pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, and they added to their signature on their pictures the letters "P. R. B." But he soon saw there was more affectation than truth in the new school, and abandoned his protest. The signature of the three letters only appears on three of his pictures.

Millais is kind to young artists. A painter, uncertain about himself, went one day to see him, and asked if he would not do better to turn farmer. Millais put a sum of money into his hand, and replied "Work!" A short time after the young man finished a picture that was admired even by the severe critic Ruskin.

Millais is as popular as his work is celebrated, and everybody knows "Chill October," "Sir

Walter Ralèigh," and others that are masterpieces and true poems. He is an agreeable man, and welcomed in the highest society.

Now, we go to Regent's Park, and arrive at a house that I need not name, for it has been described so many times that you will recognize it at once. The owner of this very original dwelling is the kindly artist Alma Tadema, a simple, good-natured, communicative, unceremonious Dutchman.

On the Italian *façade* of the great square house is a frieze of porcelain, and the Latin word *salve*. On the left are two rooms, in the first a piano, some pictures, and a charming portrait of Mrs. Tadema. The second room opens into a conservatory adorned by a bust of the painter's charming wife, executed by Dalon; on the right a room, or rather a little museum, with a curious Japanese painting on silk, more than two yards long, hanging on the wall; above it ten old escutcheons in carved wood; the arms of the Corporation of Tailors of Leyden; the window is formed of pretty Dutch

panes. In the dining-room the large-patterned paper blends so harmoniously with the painted ceiling, that the transition can scarcely be discovered. Above the chimney-piece is a full-length portrait of one of Alma Tadema's daughters. Beyond is a large and beautiful garden.

Let us go upstairs. The walls of the staircase are covered with photographs of the artist's works. On the first floor we enter a little drawing-room all in gold, but of a dull harmonious tone. A mirror with a silver frame, and several other objects stand out in relief from this well-designed background. The mantlepiece is adorned with a pretty bronze figure of Mrs. Tadema, lying on a couch. The window is made of a multitude of little divisions filled with semi-transparent panes of Mexican onyx. But the wonder of this drawing-room is a piano that the artist himself has designed. It is a mixture of delicately blended colours and of exquisite and varied carving. On the sides there are bas-reliefs, and at the lower end of the piano a head of Orpheus in silver.

Open the instrument and a surprise awaits you; it contains a treasure, for it is lined on the inside with vellum as white as ivory, and this is covered with autographs of all the most eminent artists in Europe. Alma Tadema is an excellent musician.

We next enter an eastern boudoir, a kind of divan, with a parquet in black and white. At last we reach the studio, a large room entirely painted in the Pompeian style, with pillars, frescoes, &c., and containing the reproduction of the Library of Herculaneum. It is here that the master receives.

Alma Tadema is a pupil of Leys, the great painter of Antwerp, and has lived in London for fifteen years. He was the first to colour the walls of his studio, and dispelled the prejudice that they ought always to be of a uniform grey. He was at that time painting "The Education of the Children of Clotilde," and he used to try effects and practise upon the walls, which were soon covered with "Merovingian" costumes.

His wife is also a distinguished artist; she

is very charming, and reminds me of another artist, the wife of Tinant, the sculptor, and mother of the young caricaturist, Robert Tinant, who died so young.

Alma Tadema is leaving his present house for that formerly occupied by the French painter, Tissot.

Alma Tadema has produced about 250 pictures in oil or water-colours; and since his picture of the "Pyrrhean Dance," has taken a foremost place in London.

One little anecdote about him. A young man went one day to his studio and asked him to give him lessons; he replied that he did not take pupils, and advised him to continue his studies by travel. When the young man returned, he renewed his request. "Well," said the artist, "I will give you lessons in this way: you shall name the subject for a picture; I will paint it in your studio while you look on, and then you shall buy it."

This was done, and the young man profited so well by the lessons that he was enabled to paint

the charming portrait of Mrs. Tadema that I have already mentioned. The picture painted under these conditions was "The Artist's Model," and it was exhibited last year at the Paris Salon.

A very curious person is Mr. Whistler, the American painter, but an agreeable man. He studied at Paris, where his first picture, "The White Girl," will be remembered. He has painted in a house at Kensington an entire room, called the "Peacock" room—a marvellous piece of work. His drawing is much like that of Rembrandt; but he is reproached with never finishing his pictures; yet they are full of truth, and he only copies from nature. He is a correct draughtsman, and has a true sense of colour.

Poynter has exercised great influence on decorative art, and effected much good, especially as director of the Fine Arts at the South Kensington Museum.

Herkomer, whose hair and beard look as if they were blown by the wind, is a Bavarian,

thirty-six years of age, with a fine head, and great enthusiasm. He is a rapid worker, an excellent painter, and a very interesting man. Born in America, the son of poor parents, he came and established himself in London, and is now a naturalized Englishman. A painter, sculptor, and even a good blacksmith, he is clever at everything; does not smoke or drink, and has made a large fortune. He is a clever and kindly critic, and a gay, generous companion.

Carl Haag, also a Bavarian, is at the head of painters in water-colours, a great favourite at the Court, and a conscientious artist, who, having travelled much in the East, can see nothing but the East, paint nothing but the East, and has built himself an extremely curious studio of Egyptian bric-à-brac.

I should like to have spoken to you of Frank Holl, Hunt, Cooper, Beyle, whose fine "Apple Blossom," is so attractive, but I must refrain, and must also neglect the sculptors, or this letter will never end.

Every one knows the woman washing a child, called here "The Dirty Boy," and the two ragamuffins disputing over the sale of a newspaper to a passer-by, "I am first, sir." These very popular works are by Focardi, the sculptor, who has executed many others, and is very successful in London.

One word also of another sculptor, Count Gleichen, a nephew of the Queen, whose real name is, His Serene Highness Victor Ferdinand Franz Eugene Gustave Adolphe Constantin Frederic de Hohenlohe-Langenburg. He is a plain-dealing man, frank and open, very much liked; he began his career in the navy, and dropped his title of admiral for that of sculptor. He served in the Crimea, and was wounded three times. He married the daughter of Admiral Seymour, and from that time abandoned the title of prince and uses the unassuming appellation of Count Gleichen. He lives at Windsor Castle, of which he is Governor. He has executed works of great merit, and among others a bust of Mary Anderson, last year.

EIGHTEENTH LETTER.

THEATRES AND AMUSEMENTS.

FORTY years ago the drama scarcely existed in London, but French pieces have been translated, and the taste for the theatre has gradually been developed. Dramatic authors have improved; a few possess very great talent. Formerly theatres were to be let everywhere, but now they are competed for. A theatre is let in England exactly like a house, on lease, by the year, the month, the week, or even for a single performance. The manager is sometimes an author, but more frequently an actor.

The fraternity of adapters has given rise to that of imitators, who, for want of time and talent, copy and pilfer foreign pieces without scruple.

There is no society with the power of imposing a uniform author's fee on theatres; the authors make their own arrangements with the managers, and the society that does exist only aims at obtaining the sums agreed upon. Every author fixes the price of his piece as he chooses.

A good dramatic author can earn much money in England, but three-quarters of them have other occupations. The national English theatre lives on its rather limited repertory. I will not speak of the universal Shakespeare—the colossus who rules the world. The last century gave the theatre the comedies of Sheridan; more recently there has been a great number of dramatic writers of indisputable talent—Boucicault, Petitt, Conquest, Sims, Herman, John Taylor, &c.

At the present time one of the most powerful dramatic authors is unquestionably Mr. Sims, who seems to have undertaken to revolutionize the English stage. He passes his life in studying the social strata of this new Babylon called London, and may be seen every morning in the

very poorest quarters mingling with vagrants, scamps, riffraff, the very dregs of society. Poverty, theft, unblushing infamy, or cowering shame, nothing is unknown to him.

Owing to the rich harvest that he gathers, his dramas give us heartrending realistic scenes, where he mingles the evil of the upper classes and the evil of the mob in order to compare and stigmatize them all, and depicts generous self-sacrifice and greatness of soul contrasted with the poorest surroundings. He puts aside the conventionality of the drama, and cares only for what is real.

Mr. Sims will certainly win a place in London similar to that occupied in France by Dumas and Sardou, and although the last comer, he is the favourite and most fashionable.

English comedies, not having the resource of guilty love, are apt to be insipid. The dramas are, however, fine when they deal frankly with the national virtues and vices. Money, that plays so great a part in England, becomes the motive of adventurers of every kind, usurers, swindlers,

thieves, burglars, &c., and the scenes are rapid and amusing.

The English have not yet a dramatic literature of their own. When they can venture to exhibit English society as it really is, they will find an inexhaustible supply of excellent pieces in real life.

In consequence of the exorbitant demands of singers, the Italian opera is for the moment not to be heard in London. There have been several attempts at a French theatre. M. Mayer has revived the short French seasons, and this year has had a winter season. His success must be attributed to his choice of artists: Jane Hading, who made all London run after her; Jane May, who was much admired; the graceful, lively, fascinating Rose Lion, who played in every piece; and Mademoiselle Gerfaut, who became known in the "Pattes de Mouches," and at once took the first rank with these other three. The men, Shey, Didier, Colombey, are worthy of the best days of the French stage.

The most talented actors are Irving, Wilson Barrett, Madame Modjeska, Mrs. Kendal, and Ellen Terry. Nothing is more comical in London than the comic actors, and nothing worse than those who play the lover. Lionel Brough, Anson, Paulton, Roberts, and Toole would make the fortune of the Paris Palais Royal.

The chorus singers are generally pretty, and there is an increasing number of young, fascinating, and clever artistes, such as Florence St. John, Kate Munroe, Violet Cameron, Nellie Power, Miss Fortescue, and Lillian Russell.

The pieces are put upon the stage with lavish decoration and with charming effects of light.

In short, like music and painting, the dramatic art is developing rapidly, and makes fresh strides every day. There is no national school of dramatic art in London, so that much talent is lost for lack of training, and many persons act who have not the least idea of their art; but progress is evident, although it is made at random.

Most of the theatres have done away with the

necessity of buying a programme, and of leaving your great-coat in the cloak-room. When you have paid for your ticket you need not pay for anything else. Gratuities are forbidden, programmes are presented, the misery of narrow benches and of greedy box-keepers is unknown; the cloak-room is free, and the manager posts up everywhere "No fees."

NINETEENTH LETTER.

MUSIC.

NOWHERE is so much music heard as in London; from the music in the streets, to great concerts that are not confined to the numerous halls built on purpose for them, but invade the drawing-rooms of great houses, where a guinea is charged for the privilege of admission. English ears seem never tired; and besides all this, schools and town halls are used for concerts.

London has no Conservatoire, though there are, it is true, a number of Schools of Music, the Royal College, the Royal Academy, the Guildhall School, and others; but these are all either private undertakings or societies; the lessons are very expensive, and the teaching

leaves much to be desired. For example, the Sol-fa and Theory of Music are not obligatory, and a scholar may receive honours and distinctions who cannot read a line of music at sight, or beat the time of a single bar.

The winners of prizes and medals at these schools would not be allowed to compete for a prize in a Conservatoire on the Continent. If they wanted to do so, they would have to begin their studies over again.

The Royal College still wants a hundred thousand pounds, and is begging for money on all sides. But for all that concerns these institutions, and English music in general, I refer you to a very fair, well-written book, which is none the worse for being also amusing—"La Musique au Pays des Brouillards."

The Guildhall School of Music is supported by the Corporation of the City. The school has from two to three thousand pupils, to whom a very small amount of teaching is allotted. The length of the lessons will give you an idea of this—twenty minutes a week!

There are plenty of private professors, but good ones are very scarce. The Grammar of Music is unknown in London, and no pupil would submit to being forced to learn it. The Sol-fa is here called Harmony. If you ask a young lady to beat the time of a piece, she tells you that she is not going to be the leader of an orchestra. Singing is even more badly taught; the Sol-fa is not considered to have anything to do with it, and, except by a few foreign professors, vocalization is not taught. It is not even necessary to ask whether you have a voice; you want to sing, and you sing, never mind how. You need not even give yourself the trouble of bringing out your voice, or of cultivating it.

Among professional musicians there are many of great talent—Mackenzie, Dr. Stanford, &c.—who have succeeded Balfe and Sterndale Bennett; there are also classical composers like Macfarren and Cowan. The latter, whom the German masters are proud to call their pupil, has written some remarkable symphonies, oratorios, and

even an opera, which place him in the first rank of modern composers; indeed his Scandinavian Symphony is a *chef-d'œuvre* that will remain a standard work. There are also composers of light music; Sullivan, who writes very pretty romances, gay little operettas, and now and then serious music; Strada, a delightful composer, who will soon be the most fashionable musician, and will, I think, shine at the theatres of Paris. His "Boutade," so popular in England, is the most original and charming piece that has ever been written for that unaccommodating instrument—the piano. There is also Ivan Caryll, who, while waiting to be recalled to Paris, is making a position as a writer of operettas in London. I pass by many others, and perhaps the best, for the list might be a long one. The favourite musicians are mostly Germans, who, indeed, are put at the head of every institution here, and who come from every quarter of Germany.

The invasion began with Sir Julius Benedict, a pupil of Weber, and leader of the orchestra at

the Opera at Vienna, and afterwards of Saint Carlo.

He came to London at thirty years of age, and has composed an opera and various pieces. He was knighted by the Queen, and, at the age of seventy-eight, married for the second time. Benedict is at the head of the musical world in England, and has always been popular in society.

TWENTIETH LETTER.

THE CITY AND THE LORD MAYOR.

You know that a part of London near the centre and entirely devoted to national and international business is called the City; an enormous mart, where in thousands of agency offices, occupied from the cellar to the roof by business, all the commerce of England is centred. There the most colossal enterprises are planned and projected. This separate little corner, unique in the world, is still ruled by institutions of the Middle Ages, and exhibits a curious combination of progress and feudality, which makes it resemble a car dragged in opposite directions by two teams of horses.

The City is under the jurisdiction of the

Lord Mayor—a magistrate chosen for a year from among the richest merchants who have reached the rank of Alderman and Sheriff. Outside the City the Lord Mayor is nobody. His palace—the Mansion House, opposite the Exchange and the Bank—has Guildhall for a branch establishment, a temple of justice, exclusively reserved for the culprits of the City.

I do not intend to describe the City in its commercial aspect, but only to depict what is supposed to be its SOCIETY. I therefore leave men of business, who, indeed, do not exist after their hours of work; but, shaking off the dust of their offices, belong to another world. All these merchants, love their old city, and from time immemorial have formed a real court round their sovereign the Lord Mayor.

The organization of the City is as follows:—About one-fifth of the men of business, who have their offices there, have to elect a Municipal Council of 206 members, generally chosen from the leading merchants. This Council includes twenty-six aldermen, each at the head of one

of the twenty-six quarters of the City; then come the Sheriffs, and finally the Lord Mayor, elected from the two aldermen who have been chosen by the liverymen or members of the corporations.

It is then that the masquerade of the 9th of November takes place, when the Lord Mayor goes to be installed in his office, formerly at Westminster, and now at the New Law Courts, accompanied by a procession, that has preserved its mediæval character.

The Common Council is absolute master, and suffers no control; the Government has nothing to do with it. The Lord Mayor is absolute in his City; the Queen could not cross it without his permission, and the Guards would not dare to enter without his authority.

Besides this official organization, the heads of each trade have united and formed Corporations, that, from donations, bequests, &c., are richer than many of our municipalities. These Corporations possess land that in the course of centuries has acquired enormous value.

The fortune accumulated in their hands is employed in founding schools, colleges, asylums, hospitals, building markets, giving scholarships, and even, as you see, in an Academy of Music, all within sound of Bow Bells, that is to say within the boundaries of this little kingdom of shopkeepers. The wealth of the Corporations is so gigantic that some of their superfluous funds are distributed to other charities, or to poor institutions; but the establishment thus created, and the charities they dispose of are always for the benefit of their own members who have fallen into poverty, or who need assistance.

The Corporations are divided as follows; the Court, that administers the funds, and the Livery (this word indicates that the latter have the right to wear the costume of the corporation). The members of the Court are elected from among the liverymen. When a place is vacated by death, the choice ought to fall in order of seniority on persons who belong to the trade of the Corporation; but this is not

done, and young members, who do not belong to the business, are often chosen, provided they are rich and influential. The Corporations were supposed to admit only persons of their own profession; but the sons of former merchants were afterwards accepted, thus persons who had nothing to do with business could obtain this right, either by election, or for the modest sum of 100*l.* Much value is set on belonging to one of these associations, and the Prince of Wales himself is a member of the Corporation of Tailors.

These Corporations used to be called Guilds, whence the place where they meet receives the name of "Guildhall." Some of them, such as the Crossbowmen, Ropemakers, &c., are now only traditional, their trades having disappeared; but they still exist as Corporations.

Besides their philanthropic institutions and other good works, these societies manifest their existence by the dinners they give, and should the Municipal Government be changed, there is at least this consolation for them, the dinners

may continue. Great wealth is displayed at these magnificent repasts.

Conscious of the accomplishment of a great duty, the merchants of the city of London dine with the solemnity of priests performing their sacred functions.

Another souvenir of feudal times are the Inns of Court, of which there are four—the Inner Temple and the Middle Temple, that used to belong to the Knights Templars; Lincoln's Inn, that was the property of the Black Friars; and Grays Inn, the primitive residence of Lord Gray. Once inns in reality, as students destined to the Law were formerly obliged to live there for three years, as students at Oxford and Cambridge still have to do; residence gradually became optional, and now students no longer live there at all, and the buildings are converted into lawyers' offices. But the students are still obliged to dine six times in a term in one of the special Halls, where the table on the left is reserved for them, while the table on the right belongs to the Barristers,

who are not obliged to attend. Every one admitted to these fraternal feasts has to wear his wig and gown; even the waiters are still dressed up in their last-century costumes. The aim of these dinners, it appears, or rather the traditional intention of them, is to make sure of the presence of the students in London. These Inns resemble veritable monasteries, with their refectory, library, gardens, lodge-porters, and gates that are closed at ten o'clock.

The Inns of Chancery are old colleges that have become societies of solicitors, who also only meet in order to dine.

The Freemasons also have their temples in the city, but they are only *restaurants*, and the monthly meetings take place round a dinner-table. Charity is the only mission of Freemasons in London, and they rival the City Corporations in lavish generosity. During the last eleven years they have given 350,000*l.* to three Masonic Institutions.

Any pretext for giving a dinner is welcome to the Lord Mayor. First there is a certain

number of official banquets, like that of the 9th of November, his coronation day; then dinners given to the winners of the Oxford and Cambridge boat race, to various societies, to extraordinary ambassadors, to noble foreigners, to members of Congress, &c. At these banquets an infinite number of speeches are made, the English excelling, as you know, in this kind of after-dinner eloquence. Ladies are admitted to most of the dinners at the Mansion House, even though they are forbidden other gastronomic exhibitions.

I have not exhausted all the gaieties of the city by a long way; a biography of all the Lord Mayors would be one of the most delightful books in the world. But, however unwillingly, I must end this letter, to which I might have given the title of "Dinners."

TWENTY-FIRST LETTER.

THE MIDDLE CLASS.

I HAVE little to tell you about the middle class, except that it apes the aristocracy, but has fewer vices and more prejudices.

"God and my right!" This is the motto of the Englishman to whatever class he may belong, and my right comes first, and God afterwards! A nation that defines itself by a coarse expression of care for personal interest, and for nothing else, how can it be anything but selfish? An Englishman will never inconvenience himself in order not to inconvenience his neighbour. Many of them complain of this, but foreigners are the greatest sufferers from it. Yet it is wrong to say that the English are coarse and

rude. Ill-educated Englishmen are so, and such may be found in the highest aristocracy. Well-educated Englishmen are coldly and punctiliously polite in an undemonstrative, calm way. This politeness exists even in the lowest classes, and there are many workmen with better manners than some lords. The worst impression of Englishmen is given by their utter indifference to one another, and to every one whom they do not know.

Prejudices are especially long-lived in England. One of these prejudices of English people is their love of dress; they must be *en toilette;* they dress when they get up, and know nothing of the delights of a dressing-gown and slippers. In the evening, at an hour when we resume those cherished garments, consecrated to ease and intimacy, they dress themselves up as if for parade or a village procession.

This would be all very well when receiving guests; but no, Monsieur has no one with him but Madame, or perhaps he is dining absolutely alone, and yet he will put on evening dress before

sitting down to table. You will not believe me, but I swear that I have seen it.

It is undeniable that the English are cold people; yet they are very fond of pleasure, and spend money on it recklessly; but they take it in such an undemonstrative way, that it seems extremely comical to us to hear them utter the customary phrase, "I enjoyed myself immensely."

Besides the defective national education, there is very great ignorance, not of what is to be learnt from books, for therein they are better informed than we are, but ignorance of the ordinary affairs of life, of the things learnt no one knows how. It is the education that comes from things around us, from the outer world, from travel, and from general ideas, that gives the polish to conversation among Russians, French, and Austrians, which, without any profundity, enables them to shine in society.

As I have mentioned education I will say one word more about it. Among the aristocracy young girls are taught by a resident governess

and various professors, and sports, especially riding, are regarded as important studies. Schools are chiefly used by the middle class, and there are some very good ones; but the majority are cramped by routine. When a lady engages a governess, she requires from a poor young girl everything that a human being could learn in a long lifetime—Latin, foreign languages, arts and sciences, every accomplishment; and her requirements are as great as the salary she offers is small. The Phœnix that a middle-class family requires is probably offered 25*l.* a year.

Young men have excellent schools, and complete their education at the celebrated Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Edinburgh. But even there sports are considered as important as study, and to be first at football, cricket, or a boat-race is quite as creditable as to win a scholarship or to take a degree.

In sports the English are the masters of the world. Facts are more agreeable to their minds than thoughts, and their numerous talents are

rather solid than brilliant. But they have one good quality, the opposite to our national defect, they never speak without thinking. The national character can be best studied in the middle class, for there extremes either of vice or virtue do not exist. England is, in short, a fine, great, and generous nation, exceedingly hospitable, and the popular prejudice against her in Russia and in France is profoundly unjust.

Although formality reigns everywhere, there are some pleasant *salons*, and the middle class, which occupies a great position in London, offers much amusement to foreigners, and makes them very welcome, provided they are people of culture.

More money is spent on visitors here than anywhere else; there are more receptions given than in Russia or in France, and many people keep open house to their friends. Wealthy families receive every week, or at least every month, and crowd to all places of amusement.

The English middle class does not possess

estates, but each family rents a house in the country for the season, or goes to the seaside. No one passes the whole year in London; the first sunshiny day produces a longing for "a little change," and an entire family packs up its trunks and departs. All the watering-places are not equally fashionable. Brighton attracts the fashionable world from October to December; in the winter people go to Eastbourne, Ventnor, Torquay, Bournemouth, and in the autumn to Hastings, Folkestone, or Scarborough. Margate and Ramsgate are much less elegant, and Southend, though it is a delightful little place, is only visited by people of slender means.

TWENTY-SECOND LETTER.

SOCIETY.

In a city like London—the richest in the world, and where the conditions of fortune do not always accord with position and birth—society is a very vague expression. The English themselves divide it into two parts, nobility and gentry, but between these two terms it is very difficult to decide the exact limits.

England has several kinds of nobility; the grand old nobility of land and of the sword; then the aristocracy of money. In a country where every man is the maker of his own fortune it is natural that there should be a great many titled parvenus. Then come the small fry—the modern lords, the new baronets, and knights.

The "gentry" necessarily includes members of the fashionable world who have no titles, and the upper middle class, great financiers, men who have made large fortunes; for if money does not make happiness it at least procures a very comfortable place in the world.

The great number of people possessing large fortunes has caused divisions and distinctions that are extremely amusing. It is perfectly natural that a man possessing a hundred to a hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year could not receive a poor fellow who had not more than a thousand a year; quite a beggarly sum in London. There would be too much difference in the entertainments given and received. The upper middle-class delights in luxury and elegance, and only differs from the aristocracy by lack of title; the lower middle class is composed of men with modest incomes (from two to four thousand a year), of City merchants, lawyers, doctors, &c.

Below the upper and lower middle-class there is a succession of divisions and sub-divisions

until you reach lodging-houses, furnished apartments, and shop parlours. It is a curious thing that there is much similarity in all these classes with regard to entertainments, with more or less etiquette as the rank of the host requires, and, as usual, the lower you go the more amusement is to be found.

These are the customs of society as regards parties: The invitations are given on a printed card with nothing but "Mrs. X. at home" on such a day. If it is a ball, there is the word "dancing" in the corner, if a musical evening, "music," and sometimes "theatricals," for society in England has a mania for drawing-room performances, without much regard to the talent of the performers.

The card also often bears the information that Mrs. X. is "at home" every Tuesday, or every Sunday (Sundays are getting very fashionable), or the first Monday in every month, &c., and that means that except on this particular day, she does not want to see you. Every lady has her weekly or monthly "day," when her

friends appear for a few minutes, drink a cup of tea, revile their neighbours, complain of their servants, and criticize the toilettes of their dearest friends.

The great defect of English society is the want of sociability; after six o'clock in the evening no one ventures to knock at his neighbour's door, unless he has been specially invited. The charm of intimacy is lost in this isolation and in the crush of over-crowded parties. In the summer any one who possesses a garden is delighted to turn the "at home" into a "garden party." Invitations are given for the afternoon, just the same as for the evening, but there is very seldom any dancing at the receptions that are held between four and seven o'clock.

In each house, you find two large rooms, one devoted to the inevitable music, and the other to refreshments; this room is literally besieged —tea, coffee, lemonade, claret-cup, sherry, port, fruit of all kinds, cakes, sandwiches, ices,

and sometimes champagne, everything is to be found there!

In the drawing-room, so soon as an audience is assembled, one piece of music follows the other without leaving you time to make a single observation, or to answer a single question. It is a *cuéli-cuelo* of amateurs who set your teeth on edge, and of professionals of all kinds. Singers are generally listened to, however dreadful they may be, and you cannot imagine how dreadful they are unless you have heard young girls who think they can sing after a dozen lessons, and men who sing without any lessons at all, people who never go out without their music, even to make a call, without style, without voice, without time, and without mercy, sighing forth romances in a perfectly unintelligible language. An Italian said to me the other day, "In our country, if an animal were to make a noise like that, we should wring its neck."

As for the piano, it is understood to be a

machine to set people talking, and as soon as the first notes are heard, conversation begins on all sides, and is only checked by the last chord. I heard a lady say to another after an artiste had played very brilliantly, "She made such a noise, we couldn't hear ourselves speak."

Evening parties never begin before ten o'clock, and in the higher circles they are soon over; every one has gone before twelve o'clock, unless it is a ball. These receptions often follow a dinner, and form a pleasant conclusion to it.

In the middle class, especially in its lower circles, parties are kept up very late, and the horrible music goes on for ever. Between eleven and twelve the lady of the house makes a quiet little sign to the gentlemen, and understanding what that means, each one offers his arm to a lady, and takes her to the supper-room, where a magnificent repast awaits them: meat, poultry, salmon, tongue, sandwiches, creams, cakes, fruit, &c.

The *soirée* continues after the supper, and very often ends with a dance, when tired or useless people depart.

At garden parties the scene is very much the same, only it takes place in a garden, and there are often games, croquet, lawn tennis, &c.; but the music—the frightful music—that is never excluded! A rival to music has lately appeared, and become terribly popular, it is recitation. The infatuation is the more unfortunate as the reciters have not the slightest idea of articulation or of elocution, make the most extraordinary gesticulations, utterly inappropriate to their subject, and always choose long pieces, either very silly or horribly dramatic.

I have not wished to drag you through the maze of all the clubs; but I must say one word about the New Club, where the fashionable world assembles, including ladies, the only society club that has ever succeeded. The New Club, founded two years ago, has now 600 members; music is given every evening—real music. There is dancing two or three

times a week, and charming little oyster suppers are given after the play. Dramatic representations by the first actors also take place on Saturday at midnight; Sara Bernhardt, Judic, and most of the French actors who came to London often took part in these.

The Bachelors' Club, where ladies are admitted to dine, is very inferior to the New Club.

TWENTY-THIRD LETTER.

COUNTRY HOUSES.

THE origin of many aristocratic families is by no means glorious; the descendants of the old aristocracy of the sword are now rare. Many whose titles date from the reign of Queen Anne and the time of the Georges, were only the sons of courtesans or of people of the lowest class, and have been raised more by the changes of time than by their own desert.

Sir Philip Francis, as Lord Malmesbury tells us, undertook to destroy every line of succession, by proving clearly that not a single English nobleman was the descendant of his ancestors; and no doubt, if too closely exa-

mined, many genealogies would fall to pieces like a house of cards.

The aristocracy of finance replaced the aristocracy of the sword; titles are more fairly obtained in our days; and the private life of the nobility is purer.

Among noble politicians are Lord Rosebery and Lord Stanhope; the latter is a Conservative, and enjoys universal esteem. Then come the circles of Sir Arthur Hayter, a Liberal, of Lord Hartington, and of the Duke of Sutherland—though the Duke is more interested in social questions than in politics. The financial circles are those of the Rothschilds, of Mrs. Oppenheim, Mrs. Bischoffsheim, &c. Among other fashionable *salons* I must mention those of the Duke of Westminster, the Marchioness of Santurce, Sir Allen Young, of Mr. Harford, and Sir Algernon Borthwick, the proprietor of the *Morning Post*, who is so well known in Paris. As for musical circles, like that of the charming Lady Folkestone, it would take more than a lifetime to count them.

There are also some leaders of society who lend their houses for meetings, and devote themselves to some special work, like the Duchess of Sutherland, whom I have already named, the patroness of teetotalers and the Blue Ribbon Army. Then come vegetarians, spiritualists, anti-vaccinationists, anti-vivisectionists, cremationists, theosophic circles, like that of Mr. Sinnett, æsthetic ones, like that of Mr. Oscar Wilde, and those more practical and more charitable ones devoted to the protection and emancipation of women. Viscountess Harberton, Lady Brassey, Mrs. Fawcett, and Mrs. Stuart Mill, are at the head of this movement, while the Princess of Wales, Miss Florence Nightingale, Viscountess Strangford, preside over the meetings of the Red Cross Society, which take place at Lansdown House, the residence of Lord and Lady Rosebery.

It is in his country house that the English aristocrat displays luxury unrivalled in all Europe. I should like to give you a full

description of life in these great country houses, but it would take a volume to do justice to the theme.

Every great English house has its legend, and I am sorry that I can only mention the names of the most remarkable among them. The vast and sumptuous domain of Trentham is the residence of the Duke of Sutherland; Lord Bath occupies Longleat, the finest example of the Elizabethan style; Lord Hardwick possesses Wimpole; the Duke of Westminster, Eaton Hall, the most modern of houses, and utterly tasteless, although it possesses everything that comfort and luxury can devise. Blenheim belongs to the Duke of Marlborough. The three finest seats in Yorkshire, and built about the same time, are: Castle Howard, the seat of the Earl of Carlisle; Duncan Park, recently burnt, the seat of Lord Faversham; and Harewood, that of Lord Harewood.

The loveliest park of all these lordly domains is Normanton, the property of Lord Aveland. Warwick Castle, seated on a rock, and believed

to have been built by the famous Warwick, the King-maker, belongs to Lord Warwick, and is unrivalled in its beauty, except, perhaps, by Windsor Castle. It has towers 147 feet high, state apartments more than 300 feet long, and the celebrated Warwick vase of white marble, found at Tivoli, that will hold 163 gallons.

Goodwood, well known for its celebrated races, belongs to the Duke of Richmond; Chatsworth to the Duke of Devonshire, the father of Lord Hartington. Witley Court is the residence of Lord Dudley; Badminton, of the Duke of Beaufort; Lowther, of Lord Lonsdale; Arundel Castle, of the Duke of Norfolk; and Alnwick, of the Duke of Northumberland.

Very curious fêtes are sometimes given at these country houses; thus at Southam-de-la-Bere, the late seat of Lord Ellenborough, an ancient custom was revived in the month of February. Miss Sergison, as Queen Elizabeth, received her guests in state, surrounded by courtiers, banners, and heralds. A lord of misrule was crowned with pomp, and led the

revels; there was a masquerade and dancing, St. George and the Dragon, the Princess Rowena and the wassail-bowl, Druids and mistletoe, wooden horses, and a tournament, presided over by the queen, a yule-log, and the procession of the boar's head at the beginning and at the end of the entertainment.

In the month of August last Lady Archibald Campbell gave, at Coombe House, Kingston, a dramatic representation that had to be repeated three times, and which all London rushed to see. Behind her gardens are woods that she transformed into a natural stage, and acted in the open air Shakespeare's "As You Like It," four acts of which take place in a forest. Light hangings fastened to the branches of the trees protected the audience from the burning rays of the sun; mosses and ferns replaced the footlights, side scenes and background were all natural, and had long vistas that the nature of the spot admirably lent itself to. The entrances and exits, the gradual retreat of the actors among the trees, the sound of voices dying away in the distance,

the strange effect of the choruses in the forest, the rays of soft light breaking through the sombre foliage, the gentle sounds of the country, the cries of birds, the rustling of the leaves, stirred by a light breeze, the perfume of this living, animated nature, all combined to make a fairy scene.

Lady Archibald played Orlando, and a few amateurs took part, but the principal characters were entrusted to well-known actors.

When there is no fête going on at a country house the day passes somewhat in this fashion. From 9.30 to 10.30 people come down to breakfast, and as soon as the mistress of the house appears no one else is waited for. After breakfast the party separates, and each person occupies himself as he likes best until two o'clock. The ladies write letters, or collect in the drawing-room with their needlework; the gentlemen walk about and amuse themselves as best they can. At two o'clock luncheon is served, at three the carriages appear—wagonettes, landaus, victorias, saddle horses, &c., &c. Each

one chooses the mode of locomotion that suits him best, and off they go. At five o'clock every one is back again for tea, over which they gossip till 6.30; then they dress for the seven o'clock dinner, and the evening is devoted to music, whist, conversation, and work: nothing can be more simple.

TWENTY-FOURTH LETTER.

THE DIPLOMATIC BODY.

DURING the last thirty years great changes have taken place in the Diplomatic Service. Ambassadors are now little more than employés, except in the case of Russia; she still has diplomats and uses them. In London the foreign ambassadors are changed so often that they have not time to make their way in society, and society has not time to know them. Those who give large parties succeed in making a position for themselves, but except M. Van de Weyer, Count Karolyi, and M. de Staal, few ambassadors have become intimate with the members of the English aristocracy.

M. and Mdme. de Falbe, of the Danish Embassy, are friends of the Princess of Wales on account of their nationality. M. Waddington has not succeeded in society; and the French Ambassadors are so often changed that they only enjoy a momentary popularity, even when they obtain so much. Count Herbert Bismarck and Count Pourtalés have an important place in society. The ambassadors live in a world of their own, an official world. The senior ambassador in London, who therefore has the right of precedence, is Musurus Pasha, seventy-seven years of age, and since 1851 the representative of the Ottoman Porte. Born in Candia, he was Governor of Samos, and had a sufficiently stormy youth. His skill and energy won him the post of ambassador at Vienna, and afterwards at London. He came here during the Crimean War, and managed so well that he was made Ambassador in 1856, was decorated at the conclusion of the negotiations at Paris, and received the title of Pasha on the occasion of the Sultan's

visit to London. The opposition of the Porte to the conclusion of the Protocol of the Powers, drawn up in 1877 at the Conference at Constantinople, is attributed to his influence. He is a man who sleeps with one eye open, and that eye is always turned to the Black Sea. Very active, in spite of his languid manners, he is the most important ambassador in London with regard to the interests of England in the East.

After him must come Count Münster, the ambassador who represents Germany, but is more English than German, for he was born in London, and his children are also English born. He may be seen twice a day driving in Rotten Row; he has very good horses and a four-in-hand, and takes more interest in sport than in diplomacy. Brought up in English habits, he has never lost them, although he was educated at Bonn.

The next in order is Count Karolyi, but as Ambassador of Austria he has rather an insignificant part to play. The Countess is a

remarkable woman, and universally respected. She is of the true Hungarian type, with grand manners, and the carriage of an empress.

Count Nigra, known to all Paris as the "Chevalier Nigra," has recently come to London. Serving as a volunteer, he was wounded at the battle of Rivoli, and as a Secretary of Cavour's, he has been entrusted with so many different missions, that he may be looked upon as a diplomatist of the old school. I know him very well, and have seen him more than once in Russia, where he was sent immediately after he left Paris in 1876. Wherever he goes he does good to Italy, and his embassy to France was very advantageous to his own country. Clever, patient, and attractive, he has a clear, resolute mind, has the right idea at the right moment, and foresees events with the greatest accuracy.

In London Count Nigra is much liked, and is esteemed as a writer, an orator, and a *savant*. His works on the dialects of popular Italian poetry are much valued. The action of his

Government on the Red Sea will give Count Nigra an important part to play in London.

I need not sketch the portrait of M. Waddington, the French Ambassador in London. Having an English father, having been educated in England, and being a Protestant, this accomplished diplomatist of fifty-seven years of age could not fail to be *persona grata* to the English public.

Count Pourtalès, with his bright, intelligent little face, "little Pourtalès," as the ladies call him, is the member of the French Embassy who is most popular in society.

M. de Staal, the Russian Ambassador, is a person of charming manners and the most perfect courtesy; in choosing him M. de Giers knew what he was about. Very well informed, accustomed to society, with a great experience of business, at once master of himself, and possessing much influence with others, a graduate of the University of Moscow, he was secretary to several embassies, in 1869 wa named Chamberlain of the Court, and subse-

quently was minister at Wurtemburg. He only arrived in London a few months ago, but conquered society at once. M. de Staal has the most exquisite politeness and imperturbable urbanity. He excels in the art of persuading, and is just the fascinating person required at this difficult moment to appease the irritation that has arisen between the two countries, to make himself agreeable to the English people, please society, and perhaps prevent war. De Staal is an exquisite talker, and no one listens so well, or has such a graceful manner of appearing to share your opinions.

Except Prince Malcolm Khan, the other diplomatists are Ministers, or *Chargés-d'affaires*, with comparatively little importance in the politics of to-day; but the Persian Minister is interested in the burning questions of the moment, and has frequent interviews with Lord Granville. The Prince is a clever diplomatist, deliberate and prudent; he listens before he speaks, and he speaks with great judgment and good sense.

Although his country has not hitherto been concerned in the politics of Europe, Prince Malcolm Khan has held an important position in England since the visit of the Shah. He is, indeed, a faithful representative of his sovereign, and has rendered great services to his country. Persia may soon have to play a part in the conflict in Afghanistan, and its embassy in London may acquire considerable importance. Malcolm Khan is such a far-seeing diplomatist that without knowing him personally, I consider him one of the real politicians of Persia, who prefer an alliance with Russia to a rupture, and who understand that the weak always obtain more from a friend than from an enemy. In society the Prince displays the most agreeable manners, and has all the dignity of his rank without any haughtiness. His wife is the personification of grace, and their house is most hospitable. The Princess is young, lovely, enthusiastic, and brilliant.

Her daughter, a brunette, a charming contrast to the pale beauties of the North, is a true

little princess. She is well educated, and gifted with exquisite tact, delicacy, and good taste.

I will not speak of the Belgian Minister, whose task is easy so long as Antwerp is not menaced, of the Dutch Minister, or of Mr. Russell Lowell, a charming, humorous American, more of an author than an Ambassador. There are others, also, who would not interest you.

In English politics, money, the universal factor, plays, as it does everywhere, and perhaps more than it does anywhere else, a very important part. Financiers are the real sovereigns of modern Europe, and, except in Russia and Germany, it is they who make peace and war.

Napoleon said that England was a nation of shopkeepers. Some people take this as an insult, others as a compliment; but however we take it, the remark is just, and a fitting homage to the practical nature of the people. Every Englishman, from the meanest to the mightiest, is a born man of business, and knows how

to profit by opportunities that others would allow to escape. The aristocracy no longer hesitates to take part in manufactures and in commerce. In London the Jews rule all the markets, the City is entirely in their hands.

The aristocracy of finance as represented by the Barings, and especially by the Rothschilds, is equal to the nobility of the sword, and society opens its doors to it. Some alliances have been made between the ancient families and the great bankers. The most important one hitherto is the marriage of Lord Rosebery with Miss Rothschild. The chiefs of English finance live in a brilliant, ostentatious manner, and spend their money as they gain it, in a large way.

Great brewers and great builders patronize public houses, theatres, and other more or less fortunate speculations. Commerce has nothing to do with the highest banking business; paper is discounted and sold to houses that are simply called merchants, like Mr. Layard, Mr. Devaux, &c.

Among the princes of finance, the dynasty of the Rothschild has become the reigning house, or I ought rather to say that the Rothschilds, with their different branches, have founded a "United States" of money. It was the Rothschilds who, when consulted by Lord Beaconsfield about his intention of buying 25,000,000*l.* worth of shares in the Suez Canal, kept the money ready for him, and thus enabled him to accomplish his unexpected and audacious stroke of policy by telegraph, and in a few hours.

There are from fifteen to twenty names to be mentioned in the aristocracy of finance, the Rothschilds, Baring, Goschen, Oppenheim, Bischofsheim, &c.

The Rothschild family in London, as everywhere else, stands at the head of financial society, and has one of the best positions in the great world, the artistic world, and on the turf. The Rothschilds are everywhere, and they are everything. Ferdinand and Alfred Rothschild enjoy a real sovereignty, and are

admired, as they deserve to be, for their royal munificence. They give magnificent fêtes, and their houses, their country seats, their receptions, and their studs and packs are unrivalled in England. Nathaniel, who owns the splendid manor of Tring Park, is perhaps the most in society of the four. Leo has just married the sister of Mrs. Sassoon.

Alfred Rothschild, the son of Lionel, has a fine moustache, mutton-chop whiskers, a slightly bald head, and elegant manners; in everything he looks and is a perfect gentleman. He is now just forty-one years of age. His mother, a very exceptional woman, made him study at Cambridge, and was anxious, as she told me one day, that her son should have a modern mind. He learnt business from his father, and has become one of the most influential directors of the Bank of England, and Consul-General for Austria. His principal duty is to represent the Rothschild family in society; this he does marvellously well, receiving princes and interviewing am-

bassadors. He knows everybody, and everybody knows him; he is an admirable host.

Leopold, the youngest son of Baron Lionel, is thirty-nine years old; like his brother, he studied at Cambridge, and his function is to represent the family in sport; so he belongs to the Jockey Club and the Turf Club, and owns Palace House at Newmarket. He is a great sportsman, and although not always lucky on the turf, he won the Derby with Sir Bevis in 1879. He is a very generous, agreeable man, and he gives unrivalled dinners.

Baron Ferdinand has three country seats, Waddeston, Aylesbury, and Manor House. The Dowager Lady Rothschild lives at Aston Clinton.

Sir Albert Sassoon—I have mentioned his alliance with the Rothschilds—is the descendant of an old Jewish family of Mesopotamia for a long time resident at Bagdad. The immense market of India attracted Sir Albert Sassoon to that country, and in the opium trade he soon became a Nabob. Albert was

known as "the Rothschild of India," and in Bombay he erected hospitals and alms-houses, and raised an equestrian statue to the Prince of Wales. Then he came to England and devoted himself to banking operations. He was well received here, became attached to the country, and has since deserted his fairy palaces that he possesses in India, preferring his magnificent mansion at Kensington.

Generous, popular, with a keen, original mind, this amiable, calm old man of sixty-seven years lives only to do good and exercise princely munificence.

The Bischoffsheims, who came from Holland, owe their fortune to the establishment of a line of pigeons between Paris and Amsterdam.

I have already spoken of Mr. Baring, Lord Northbrook, whose honoured name, like that of all his family, has always been a credit to the highest ranks of English finance. The whole world is acquainted with the great financial operations of the Barings, and the history of their millions is well known,

from those lent to Louis Philippe down to our own day. They are bankers to the Queen.

Viscount Baring, Lord Northbrook's only son, is thirty-four years of age; he has served in the Rifle Brigade and then in the Grenadier Guards; and when his father was Viceroy of India, he accompanied him as *aide-de-camp*. When he returned to Europe, he devoted himself to politics, and entered Parliament as a Liberal; and although he has not yet proved himself either an orator or a statesman, he is popular.

I come once more to Mr. Goschen. In Parliament he is the type of a model man of business, and one of those rare authors who successfully practise what they write. This he has done in the case of his "Theory of Foreign Exchanges." Too intelligent to persist in an opinion that meets with resistance, he is a sort of rallying-point in the House of Commons, neither a Conservative nor a Liberal, though he calls himself an Independent Liberal. His opinions exercise great authority, from

the acknowledged ability and good sense on which they rest. A man of the world, with courteous manners and attractive conversation, he is perfect on all points of social intercourse.

The Goschens are descended from a German family, that founded in London the well-known bank of Frühling and Goschen; there are no more Frühlings now, and the bank is managed by the three brothers of the ex-Minister, all three very distinguished men.

TWENTY-FIFTH LETTER.

SPORT.

An Englishman is a born sportsman, and, from the beginning to the end of his life, practises some of these physical exercises that build up his vigorous constitution. The boy at school has football and cricket, young girls play at tennis and at croquet; and the fair daughters of Albion are most graceful when throwing the ball and handling the racquet.

When the boy becomes a man, he still plays cricket, and in summer all London society assembles at "Lord's," and watches every stroke of the game with an interest that I must confess myself incapable of understanding. On the evening before the great cricket matches, people

send their carriages to take possession of a good place, and on the grand day spend many hours watching the rather innocent little game of throwing a ball at three little posts stuck in the ground, while the other side tries to send it away. The principal players are well known and are treated like victorious generals on a field of battle, and a ball vigorously sent back by the opponent is greeted with rounds of applause.

In London everybody rides, from the youngest to the oldest, and children who can hardly walk are taken out on horseback by their grooms. A foreigner in London should never fail to go to Hyde Park in the morning, when all the young Amazons of fashionable society display their equestrian skill. Fishing is as eagerly practised as hunting, and a good fishing lets for a very high price. Trout and salmon are very abundant, and are the delight of a great number of ardent sportsmen.

The most popular English sport is hunting. One example will enable you to form an idea

of the vast scale in which it is carried on. The Duke of Beaufort has the greatest, number of racehorses, and possesses more stables than any one in England. In the hunting season he has from sixteen to twenty horses out every day, and not one of them is saddled more than twice a week. You should see his house at Badminton to understand what hunting means. He has three packs of hounds, each of twenty-two couples; that is to say, a hundred and thirty-two dogs.

Hunting with the hounds is better in England than in any other country. There are 145 packs of foxhounds and 115 packs of harriers; in Scotland, eight of the first and one of the second; in Ireland, eighteen of the first and thirty-seven of the others; and if you count the dogs kept for stag-hunting, there are 340 packs in England; that is to say, 11,000 couples of dogs, that with the huntsmen, grooms, &c., cost 600,000*l.* a year.

Among a people so pre-eminently nautical, regattas naturally hold a prominent place, and

there are few rich Englishmen who do not possess some sort of boat, a yacht, a sailing-boat, or at least a rowing-boat. The English are the best swimmers in the world. You, no doubt, remember the exploits of Captain Webb, who swam across the Straits of Dover, and afterwards met his death in the rapids of Niagara. No one can beat an Englishman at managing a boat. There are excellent institutions in England for the protection of shipwrecked people, admirably maintained by the personal courage of the sailors.

The great national nautical display is the famous boat-race between Oxford and Cambridge. The students of these two universities elect from among themselves their captain and their crew; and after a trial of a few weeks on the Thames, the race takes place on the Saturday before Passion Week at the south-west of London, in the presence of an excited, clamorous crowd. Oxford takes for its symbol dark blue, whilst pale blue represents Cambridge, and during the week that precedes the

race every Englishman wears the colour of the side he is backing. Coachmen put a blue bow on their whips and a cockade of the same colour on their horses' heads; women wear dresses of the favourite colour, and men put on cravats and little bits of ribbon to indicate their party. Yachts and boats of all kinds follow the race, and the river is crowded with thousands of small craft. The telegraph announces the result to journals that are ready to appear the moment the result is known. Hardly a minute after the conclusion of the race, flags of the victorious colour are hoisted in town. Cheers rend the air, and the trains that take and carry away the crowd of spectators are packed as tightly as a box of sardines. It is a universal holiday; everybody is either Oxford or Cambridge, and in the evening the two crews dine with the Lord Mayor.

The Boat-race, as it is called, and the races at Epsom are the two most popular sporting tournaments. On the Derby Day all business is suspended, and even the City is deserted.

Ascot serves as a grand display of dress. The Prince of Wales goes semi-officially, and is present at the races during the whole of Ascot week.

The Goodwood course belongs to the Duke of Richmond, and was formerly private.

Nearer London there are Sandown and Kempton Park races, and finally the Derby, which all Parisians know nearly as well as their Bois de Boulogne.

There are also the Liverpool races; when Lord Sefton holds his great receptions at his mansion of Croxteth.

I must mention Punchestown races in Ireland, and then pass over all the less important ones.

Among the numerous racing-circles the most important are those of Lords Zetland, Cadogan, Alington, Falmouth, Rosebery, Hastings, Londonderry, Lascelles, Hartington, Suffolk, March, Westmoreland, and of Mr. James Lowther; of the Dukes of Portland, Westminster, St. Alban's, and Hamilton; and, finally, those of

Rothschild, Sir George Chetwynd, Mr. William Gerard, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. W. Craven, General Owen Willams, Captain Machell, and Caroline, Duchess of Montrose, who enters under the name of "Monsieur Manton."

All sportsmen knew Admiral Rous, whose pen has so well delineated these 'horsy' conflicts and who was called the "Dictator of the Turf." Lord Cadogan has written excellent things on the same subject, and may be said to have succeeded him. He is one of the stewards of the Jockey Club.

The Jockey Club consists of 70 members, 57 of whom belong, or have belonged, to one of our two legislative bodies, while twenty have held office as Ministers of the Crown. There is some difficulty in getting stewards; for Ministers in office cannot find time for it. But those who are out of office might certainly accept the post, as General Peel, and the late Lord Derby have done.

Lord Cadogan has tried to save racing from the discredit and degradation with which it is

threatened, and there is now less jobbery and immorality than there used to be; but the evil is still very great. To remedy it a legislation for the turf, that would extend and support the authority of stewards in everything that concerns the arrangement of races is wanted. At present the system universally adopted of giving power to the organizers of races, and to jockeys, much injures the authority of the Jockey Club, which is a kind of Parliament of the Turf. The stewards alone ought to make the arrangements and fix the dates of the meetings. The Jockey Club replies to all attacks made upon it by facts and statistics. In 1874 there were 1873 races, in which 1965 horses took part. In 1884 there were 1615 races, with 1982 horses. The first took place on 130 courses, and were the object of 185 meetings; the last on 65 courses only, corresponding to 136 meetings, which proves the success of the efforts made by the stewards of the Jockey Club to prevent the multiplication of racecourses.

At the last Derby, when the officers of the Horse Guards alone lost 75,000*l.*, the bookmakers won 225,000*l.*, by collusion with the jockeys, who, not being able to bet on their own horses, back the horses they are not riding, and keep back their own to make their favourites win.

When the Jockey Club detects these frauds, they are punished severely; but it is very difficult to discover and to prevent them.

Fred Archer himself, the most celebrated jockey in England, who is called "the tinman," has won about 1500 races, more than 120;000*l.*

Here I must conclude. I have nothing extenuated, or set down aught in malice respecting the World of London, in which, as in every "world" all over the "wide, wide" one, there is much to condemn, and much to admire.

THE END.

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